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ABSTRACT

The Services for Transition to Independence through Education (STRIDE) project evaluated a model for providing comprehensive training and employment services to adults with mild handicaps, using existing vocational education classes and special needs support programs in a secondary vocational technical school in Altoona, Pennsylvania. Services were provided over a 2-year period and included three phases: (1) recruitment and assessment; (2) provision of 180 days of vocational, interpersonal, and basic skills training; and (3) transition into full-time paid employment using a work study site. Placement of adult clients in existing vocational education classes proved very successful. The project provided services to 43 mildly handicapped adults in any of 15 vocational areas, of whom 82 percent finished the training program. Specific sections of the final report deal with project purposes, project activities, project evaluation, service delivery accomplishments, model building accomplishments, and conclusions. Five references and six appendixes of project-related materials are attached. An accompanying manual for project implementation provides guidance for 18 implementation steps including: assemble the project team; identify the target audience; identify goals and objectives; offer staff adequate ongoing support; recruit students and implement the three-phase service delivery program; identify results; and make recommendations. Eight appendixes to the manual provided additional detail and forms. (DB)

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Project **STRIDE**: Services for Transition to Independence Through Education

Final Report

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Project **STRIDE**: Services for Transition to Independence Through Education

Final Report

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Executive Brief

Overview

The Services for Transition to Independence Through Education (STRIDE) project was designed to test the feasibility of a model to provide comprehensive training and employment services to adults with mild handicaps using capacity in existing vocational education classes and special needs support programs in Pennsylvania's secondary school area vocational technical schools (AVTS). The intent was to develop a program with per-pupil cost that could be covered by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, thus utilizing existing AVTS resources and increaseing the likelihood of continuation and replication. The project was a joint effort of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at the Pennsylvania State University and the Altoona Area Vocational Technical School in Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was conducted from July 1988 to June 1990.

The Project STRIDE model for services to clients consisted of three phases conducted over a two year period. Phase one included (a) recruitment and (b) assessment of clients occupational attitudes, interests, and (c) assessment of job-related basic skills from which an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) was developed. Phase two consisted of 180 days of vocational training, life coping skills training, interpersonal skills training, and on an individual basis, job-related basic skills remediation and personal counseling. The first two phases were completed in the first year. In phase three, the second year of training, clients transitioned into full-time paid employment using a work study (CO-OP site). Clients were followed up on a regular basis during the second year.

Except for an on-site project coordinator, project STRIDE used existing programs, staff and facilities at Altoona AVTS. A unique aspect of the project

was that the adult clients attended vocational education training with high school students in existing classes. This feature proved very successful.

Results/Findings

1. While the original client focus of the project was intended to be adults with Specific Learning Disabilities, it was found that (at least in this central Pennsylvania region) the total needs of the community were better met by providing services to a broader range of mildly handicapped adults.

2. The Project Stride model required full-time day attendance. A part-time model would also be desirable for mildly handicapped adults who may be employed but seek better opportunities.

3. The ages of Project STRIDE clients ranged from recent high school graduates or dropouts to middle-aged adults. Older adults benefitted more from the project as measured by both grades and job placement.

4. Most STRIDE clients came to the project with well-defined occupational interests. In most cases these interests were supported by occupational assessment using a SINGER assessment center.

5. Project STRIDE clients had a wide range of basic academic skills. Basic skill levels in math and reading averaged near the sixth grade level. Since many chose occupational training areas commensurate with their basic skill strengths and weaknesses, ongoing remedial assistance was often not required. Most had self-concepts in the normal range, although, a major need among most clients was noted in the area of interpersonal skills.

6. All Project STRIDE clients took vocational training in regular high school vocational education classes. Interviews with both clients and teachers as well as sociometric analyses indicated that adults integrated and performed well in this setting.

7. Eighty-two percent of clients finished the training program. Eighty-two percent received a grade of B or better in their vocational education program of study.

8. Of those who completed phase one and two in the first project year 86% were either placed or returned for a second year of training.

9. While STRIDE adults integrated effectively into the existing programs of study at the Altoona AVTS, having a program coordinator who daily monitored and counseled the students was important to the project's success.

10. High school vocational education teachers who had PROJECT STRIDE students in their classes were generally positive, feeling the presence of adults was a good influence.

Purposes

The purpose of this demonstration project was to develop, field-test and disseminate a model project to provide transitional services that result in full-time employment to adults with mild handicaps. During the first year, project 0bjectives were:

1. To establish linkages with the local Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the public school district and the intermediate unit (a multi-county special educational services unit) to facilitate recruitment of graduating learning-disabled seniors who have not received vocational training and young adults who have recently left school.

2. To recruit at least 25-30 participants to be trained during the year 1988-1989 and 30 participants to be trained during the 1989-90 academic year.

3. To obtain from each participant who has been out of school two or more years a detailed employment history, indicating jobs held, duration of employment, previous vocational training, positive and negative work experiences, as a baseline for follow-up comparison.

4. To provide vocational assessment, exploration, and counseling.

5. To design with and for each participant an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) detailing the plan for his or her participation in an identified vocational training program, basic skills instruction, life coping skills instruction and ongoing educational counseling.

6. To provide training to each participant, in either an intergenerational or adult vocational training program offered at Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School (AAVTS) . The training goal will be met if at least 80% of those beginning a training program complete it.

7. To provide vocational training and counseling to enable each participant to master at least 80% of the job competencies identified for inclusion in his or her ITP.

8. To provide educational assessment to determine current academic strengths and weaknesses related to job training and performance, including reading level and mathematics level.

9. To select or design/develop appropriate instructional materials which can be used by participants to improve work-related basic academic skills.

10. To provide individualized and group instruction for at least two hours per week for each participant aimed at improving basic skills specifically as they relate to vocational development, including work-related basic academic, life-coping and job-seeking skills.

11. To provide staff activities to improve vocational education instructors a) knowledge of characteristics of learning disabilities and b) knowledge and

utilization of compensatory strategies which may be used by or with the learning disabled worker.

12. To find a full time on-the-job-training (co-op) placement for each participant, supervised by a coordinator familiar with individual learning strengths and weaknesses.

13. To find a full time job placement for at least 80-85% of participants within three months of completion of the training program.

14. To provide consultation and assistance to both the learning disabled young adults and their employers during an initial one-year period.

15. To determine through follow-up procedures that at least 90% of those individuals placed in jobs have made a satisfactory job adjustment as indicated by remaining on one job for a period of at least six months.

16. To identify changes made in self-concept related to participation in the program and successful job placement.

Additional Second Year Objectives

17. To extend services to adults with other mild learning handicaps, including mentally retarded adults and adults with mild emotional disturbances.

18. To explore the effects of instruction in intergenerational settings on adult and secondary students.

Factors that Contributed to Changes in Goals

Three reasonably significant changes were made to goals as stated in the original project proposal . These changes grew out of the realities of the situational context, based on both constraints and opportunities not realized during the conception of the project.

The second objective of the original proposal, regarding recruitment, specified that adults identified as having learning disabilities (LD) would be the only participants in the project. Prior diagnosis was assumed to be likely for most, while a provision was made for referral to OVR for adults referred to the project without a formal diagnosis as LD. Several constraints impinged on the capability to recruit 25-30 adults with LD for the first year of the project. Funding for this particular project was announced late in June 1988, with a recommendation that the proposed three-year project be collapsed to two years. This necessitated eliminating a reduced-budget planning year and immediately recruiting students for classes to begin in late August. Given the current responsibilities of all other project staff, student recruitment could not begin until a project coordinator was hired during July. Recruitment efforts at this time were influenced by a relatively high local level of employment which affected enrollment in all adult programs at the vo-tech that fall; for many marginally skilled adults full-time training is likely to be deferred during periods when full-time employment is readily available. Early recruitment efforts were further hampered during the first few weeks of funding by a strike by local vocational rehabilitation counselors; OVR had been seen as the major referral source for students. Finally, while public school referrals did identify young adults already diagnosed as having learning disabilities through relatively recent evaluations, self-referrals in response to a newspaper ad and referrals from several community-based agencies or organizations identified adults who needed evaluation, for which the project was again dependent on OVR for support. Assistance from OVR was rapidly forthcoming once the strike ended, but evaluation revealed some of the newly referred clients were mildly handicapped although not as a result of specific learning disabilities.

After careful assessment of project recruitment status a few weeks before the start of classes vis-a-vis USOE's funding priorities, the project management team decided it was appropriate to admit several adults who were mildly retarded who had a good prognosis for successful training, as well as two adults identified by high schools as LD/BD (BD denoting a category used in the state of Pennsylvania for emotional disturbed students). The team agreed to evaluate the success of these students as well as the impact on the project of their involvement in order to decide whether the project target population should be expanded for the second funding year. Based on successful outcomes for non-LD mildly handicapped students during the first year, the project team added an objective for the second year that the project be expanded to include other handicapping conditions. Serving the learning disabled adult was still seen as a priority for the project, however, given the scarcity of available training alternatives for this population this was not feasible, as explained in the original project proposal.

A second modification to the project objectives, as stated for the first year, came in the enrollment of STRIDE students in a broader array of vocational programs than originally anticipated. Originally, project participants were to be enrolled in one of six available adult vocational clusters: building trades, computer programming, electronics, office occupations, electro-mechanical, and food service management. Two factors led to changes in this aspect of the plan of action. The low enrollment levels of adults in several of the intended training areas led to the cancellation of classes in those areas. High local employment and timing of funding announcements for the Carl Perkins Act supported programs at the vo-tech affected general recruitment and enrollment of adults. Concurrently, initial vocational assessment and intake counseling sessions with prospective STRIDE participants indicated that these individuals'

interests did not match any of the available adult programs. Instead, their interests matched a variety of the available intergenerational programs. Thus, during the first year all of the seventeen clients enrolled in one of 11 different intergenerational programs. These classes were ones attended primarily by secondary students enrolled at the vo-tech center for 1/2 day, but were also open to adult students. During the second year only two of the 26 adults placed or continuing in vocational programs were enrolled in an adult program; the remainder enrolled in one of the intergenerational programs. Across the two years, project participants participated in a total of 15 different intergenerational training programs.

The enrollment of STRIDE students in intergenerational classes where they were integrated with secondary students contributed to several informal observations and hypotheses regarding their performance and social standing in this context. Given these factors, combined with a more general interest in the growing presence of adult students in vocational-technical institutions such as AAVTS, an objective was added for the second year to conduct systematic research regarding student and teacher perceptions regarding the intermixture of adult and secondary students. For STRIDE students and their teachers direct questions regarding their perceptions of the intergenerational aspect of the classes were embedded in the exit interviews conducted for evaluation purposes. The classes of STRIDE students were also involved in a research project using the sociogram technique to investigate the acceptance of students by same-age vs. cross-age peers (adult vs. secondary) for several kinds of school-based interaction. Data from that project will be discussed as it relates to project evaluation, with a particular focus on social integration of STRIDE students.

Clientele

During the first year of the project 23 individuals completed vocational assessment (15 male and 8 female), 21 had Individual Transition Plans (ITP) completed (16 male and 5 female), and 17 students actually began the program. Of these, 14 were diagnosed as learning disabled (two with accompanying emotional disability) and 3 were diagnosed as mildly retarded.

In the second year 27 individuals completed vocational assessment. Of these, 22 persons (16 males and 6 females) had ITP's developed and began the training program. Of these, 18 were diagnosed as LD, two as learning disabled and emotional disturbed (LD/SED) and two as mildly retarded (MR) .

Sponsorship and Collaboration

The assistance of several local agencies was vital to the success of the project. Recruitment was accomplished with the assistance of school districts, the Intermediate Unit 08 (a regional service unit including special education programs), the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the local chapter of the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDAA, formerly ACLD), and adult basic education and literacy programs, a private educational service (The Encouragement Place), and a local single parent/displaced homemaker program (PEAK) Advisory council members served from all of these agencies. Advisory council participation, information provision, and in some cases direct services were also arranged with a local Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) program, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Altoona Rehabilitation Hospital and Skills of Central Pennsylvania. A separate advisory council of local employers was also constituted to solicit employer input regarding training

needs and to enhance networks for placement. Local companies which sent representatives included: Carol Wire Cable (general assembly), C-Cor Electronics (wiring and assembly), Altoona Hospital (food service and housekeeping) , Warnaco (manufacturing), and Imler Poultry (food distribution). Specific employment agreements were not negotiated with these companies, but they were nominated to the advisory committee in part because of potential job opportunities in job categories for which clients were being trained.

Contexts

The Altoona AVTS service area is fairly representative of Pennsylvania other than Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Blair County, in which Altoona AVTS resides, ranks 24th among the state's 67 counties in total wages and 23rd in total employment. In 1985, the annual average wage was $15,191 compared with a statewide average of $18,611 (Commonwealth of PA, 1989).

The Altoona Area Vocational Technical School was selected by Penn State University as a funding partner in large part because of the experience of the school staff in serving the needs of both adult students and special needs youth. One of its secondary programs, Assessment and Remediation for Mainstreaming (ARM) had recently been selected as an Exemplary Vocational Education Program (1987-88) by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Through this program the staff acquired experience in working with high-school aged youth having a variety of disabling conditions, including a large number with learning disabilities. The school also had a documented record of working cooperatively with numerous community-based organizations in the planning and delivery of a number of funded projects. The adult education and continuing education department already provided general full and part-time

programs in a variety of training programs, making active use of Carl Perkins Act funding to expand programming for adults. In addition to those programs exclusively serving adults, flexible "intergenerational" programs facilitated the placement of adults in full-time programs primarily serving secondary adults. Combined enrollments of adults in adult and intergenerational programs reached 177 by the second year of the project, representing 18 % of the total school enrollment. Specially funded projects serving other adults in the school during the funding period included Project CHANGE aimed at single parents and displaced homemakers, a project recognized as also having potential for referring students to this project.

Members of the project management team from Pennsylvania State University also brought relevant research, teaching and management experience. Project co-directors Jovita M. Ross-Gordon and Kenneth Gray represented the Adult Education and Vocational Education graduate programs respectively. Dr. Ross-Gordon also brought experience teaching learning disabled youth and adults, along with a recent background of having managed two research projects on learning disabled adults. Faculty Associate Eunice Askov and Project Assistant Lori Forlizzi represented the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, bringing experience in research and project management in the areas of adult basic education and workplace literacy.

Project Activities

Timeline

A timeline for activities over a two-year period was constructed prior to initiation of the project. That timeline, as modified at the time of second year funding reapplication, is included as Appendix A. The timeline proved to be

appropriate and feasible in all areas except for On-the-Job Training (Co-op). Because of variations in training programs and individual student's progress it was not deemed appropriate during delivery of the project to adhere to a standard schedule for initiation of co-op placement. Some students, particularly those who were involved in a second year of training, were ready for co-op placement earlier than anticipated. Others were assessed by the instructors to need additional time in the training program before placement. In some cases it was students who expressed the preference to spend the full year in training. Such decisions were made on an individual basis by the student, project coordinator and placement counselor with input from the vocational class instructor.

Project Management and Major Contributions

The project was managed by personnel representing The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) and the Altoona Area Vocational Technical School (AATVS). The project co-directors were faculty members at Penn State, Dr. Jovita M. Ross-Gordon from Adult Education and Dr. Kenneth Gray from Vocational Education. Acting as faculty associate with the project was Dr. Eunice N. Askov, Director of Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy. Percentages of the time of each of these staff members were paid for by project funding. In charge of the day-to-day management of the program was the project coordinator, Patricia Frazier, paid full-time by project funding. Ms. Frazier worked directly with students in providing group sessions and individual support as well as acting as a liaison with all AAVTS faculty teaching STRIDE students. Dale Woomer and Norm Nagl, placement counselors at AAVTS, were partially supported by project funds in their roles of locating co-op and job placements for STRIDE students. Other staff at AAVTS, whose time as

members of the project management team was contributed by the school, included the school's director, Ms. Edith Walker Isacke and staff from the Adult and Continuing Education Department, William R. Shiffler and Earl Little. Acting as a project assistant and liaison between Penn State and the AAVTS was Dr. Lori Forlizzi, supported approximately one-quarter time by the project. Dr. Forlizzi was responsible for supervision of the evaluation component of the program and implementing much of the evaluation data collection. These individuals all participated in the project management team which met approximately once per month during the first year and once every other month during the second year. Communication occurred between team meetings via telephone or through travel by the appropriate Penn State members of the Project management team.

Other members of the staff of Altoona AAVTS were involved with the project, contributing on an in-kind bases as suggested by their job roles. These individuals usually served Project STRIDE students through integrated evaluation, instructional, and counseling services. Evaluation sessions and career exploration sessions planned prior to the start of school specifically for STRIDE applicants represented the exceptional instances for which staff were given extra compensation. Several AAVTS staff members also served on the advisory committee: William Kearney, Assistant Director; and three guidance counselors, Dr. Herb Bolger, Jim Hartman, and Nancy Moore.

Contributions of several members of the local community should also be noted. John Rouzer served as principal contact and liaison for OVR services since most of the project clients were eligible for OVR services. Members of the Advisory Board (excluding AAVTS)and their affiliations are indicated below:

Mr. Henry Adams	Proctor Silex
Mr. Beau Borne	Skills Inc.

Mr. Vince DeLeo	Altoona School District
Mrs. Beverly Herdman	The Encouragement Place
Mr. Bart Raines	K-Mart
Mr. Bob Jeffco	Altoona School District
Mr. Tom Kattouf	Altoona School District
Mr. Art Wood	Altoona School District
Mr. Randy Manning	Intermediate Unit 8
Kim Eicher	Rehabilitation Hospital of Altoona
Dr. Frank Meloy	Altoona School District

During the second year a smaller general advisory board continued and a special advisory board of employers was created to maximize the input of potential employers into the project. It included:

Jean Ann Mitchell Helen Berry	Carol Wire Cable
Laurie Scheffer	C-Cor Electronics
Trev McCracken	Altoona Hospital
Denise Kelly	Warnaco
Fred Imler, Jr.	Imler Poultry

Overview of Project Actitivies

Through this project 43 mildly handicapped adults received training in one of 15 vocational areas. The activities of the project can be described in terms of vocational and academic assessment, vocational training, academic and life/job skills development, job placement and job follow-up. The scope and impact of the project may be more effectively illustrated by sharing the stories of several students.

Bobby was in the vo-tech's ninth grade dropout prevention program during the first year of the project. Mid-year his stepmother moved and Bobby did not get to finish his Vo-Tech training. After completing ninth grade, at seventeen, Bobby moved back with his father's family and requested to enter STRIDE. Psychological testing revealed a mild learning disability, and Bobby was admitted to the program. He enrolled in the same class that he had started before moving, Warehousing, and renewed friendships with several classmates. Bobby was well-liked by his teacher and classmates. He was placed in a co-op position in April and became very excited about working, given his economically limited status. As of the close of the project he was performing successfully on the job, well-liked by employer and co-workers, and looking forward to continued full-time employment.

Mr. Brown is a 44 year-old learning disabled single parent with four children. He had been unemployed for eight years. During that time he was unable to learn enough skills to obtain a job. He had been working toward his G.E.D., but had failed at his first attempt. Mr. Brown was given a vocational evaluation, which indicated an area of high interest and aptitude in Food Service. He enrolled in Project STRIDE and began training in September 1988. His ITP included services from OVR, life-coping skills , job search and keeping skills, resource room support for the classroom portion of his training, and training under the department's chef in food service. Mr. Brown also worked with the program coordinator on preparation to take the G.E.D. test. This was approved by the Department of Public Assistance (DPA) and the G.E.D. center to count towards hours required by DPA so that he would be able to complete this work during his hours at AAVTS. In May of the academic year Mr. Brown repeated the G.E.D. exam with the adaptations allowed for learning disabled adults. He was successful. During the summer following his year of

training he was placed by the school placement counselor as a utility man in the kitchen of a local branch of an international hotel chain. His first six months of employment were completed with perfect evaluations from his supervisor and the co-op placement supervisor, who reported that he was very work-oriented and made himself available for as many as 60 hours of work per week. He was also reported to be well-liked by co-workers and supervisors. The project coordinator noted improvement in Mr. Brown's self-esteem during the course of the project.

Tanya entered the STRIDE as a 18 year-old learning disabled adult of low normal ability level with learning disabilities evident in math and memory functioning. Although she had no trouble reading material for her courses, she often had to review the material several times to retain information. Tanya was placed in a two-year cosmetology program at the time she entered the STRIDE project. One of the few participants who demonstrated low general self-concept on an objective measure, the Adjective Check List, she was a perfectionist who was extremely hard on herself when she did poorly. Tanya made solid progress in her coursework and participated in group sessions on life-coping and job-related skills with several other STRIDE participants over a two-year period. Near the end of the second year Tanya was placed in a co-op position in a beauty shop. Things did not go well for her there. There are conflicting stories about why she experienced interpersonal difficulties on the job, but in the end she was released from that position. Shortly after that, Tanya took the state boards in cosmetology with little confidence in the results. She received a 94% on the boards, the highest grade any student from the school ever received. This increased her self-confidence, and she is now working on understanding and relating better to other people. Just before the end of the

project funding period Tanya was placed in a full-time position as a cosmetologist in a large chain department store.

While the reader is referred to the section of this report delineating service delivery accomplishments for a full description of outcomes related to each objective, these short vignettes give the reader a picture of the range of client diversity and outcome variability. They also give a glimpse of the diversity of student programming built around the fifteen training programs, dependent upon individual needs. An additional dimension of project activities was found in the staff development. Recognizing that most AAVTS faculty had prior experience and staff development related to working with handicapped secondary students on a mainstreamed basis through a program already existing on site, staff development was not built in as a major component of STRIDE. In addition to an orientation to the STRIDE program, teachers participating in the first year of the program were strongly encouraged by the on-site coordinator to participate in a series of five half-day workshops presented by an Intermediate Unit 08 supervisor. The workshops series, titled "ADAPT: A Developmental Activity Program for Teachers" guided staff in identifying their own teaching styles, identifying the types of disabilities typical of many LD students, and adapting textbooks and materials to student needs. Appropriate print materials on learning disabilities were also made available to teachers by the project coordinator, and individual consultation sessions were planned as needed. During the second year a formal in-service was led by project STRIDE staff to discuss adult learners and needs of teachers in assisting learning disabled adults. In addition, print materials and two videotapes were made available for faculty development purposes.

Central and Innovative Dimensions of the Program

Central dimensions of the program included a) assessment of vocational interests, aptitude, academic achievement levels, self-esteem and job-specific basic skills; b) development of an individualized Individual Transition Plan (ITP) based on results of the preceding assessment; c) vocational training, supplemented by remedial and/or developmental sessions according to the ITP (job-specific basic skills, study skills, job-seeking skills , job-keeping skills , life-coping slills); and d) job placement with program follow-up. Although not utilized on a universal basis as originally anticipated, job co-op placements also could be considered a basic component of the program.

Ancillary dimensions of the program included a) staff development, b) GED preparation, and c) referrals to other agencies for services. These dimensions were ancillary insofar as they supported attainment of the primary objectives of the program, those aimed at job training and placement.

Problems in the project primarily related to job placement and retention. Project goals regarding training were met with a completion rate of 82% during the first year and 81% during the second year. Performance of STRIDE clients in their classes ranged from good to excellent, with 82% of the clients obtaining final grades of 81% or better. The goal of full-time job placement for participants within three months of the program was not as easily obtained. Three months following training 43% of Year 1 students were placed, while 52% of Year 2 students were placed in the same time period. It is important to note, however, that four of the 14 students completing training in the first year returned for further training; counting the two of them who were placed by the end of the second year raises the proportion of first year students placed in full-time employment to 57%. Two of those completing a second year of training were still seeking employment at the close of the project. Only 14% (two of 14) of

those completing training in the first year failed to either continue training or to find part-time or full-time employment before the close of the second year. It might be assumed that a somewhat higher placement rate during the second year could be attributed to a number of factors, including greater employer receptivity to STRIDE clients and accumulated experience of the project coordinator and placement officer in placing STRIDE students.

The program was innovative for its successful delivery of a vocational training program for adults with mild learning handicaps (LD and EMR) in the mainstream environment of a Vo-tech school serving secondary and adult students. Development of a highly individualized approach enabled maximal use to be made of the services of the one full-time coordinator hired for the project. Individual and group support services were offered as needed by particular clients based on thorough initial assessments and continuing consultation with students and their teachers. The role of the coordinator became a complex one, including direct individual and group instruction, staff development and advocacy with teachers, assistance in job placement and follow-up activities, and guided referral to outside resources.

Dissemination Products and Activities

During the first year of the project an acronym for the project was developed and used on dissemination materials including two brochures (one for potential students, one for the business community -- see Appendix B). Several news releases were issued (see Appendix C). A dissemination lunch was also held for interested members of the vocational education, adult education and special education communities in the State of Pennsylvania. Speakers at the luncheon included Dr. Joyce McWilliams from the Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute at the University of Illinois and Dr. Donna Wall,

Commission, Basic Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education. Mrs. Ellen Casey, first lady of the state, was guest of honor. Presentations were also made at meetings of the Pennsylania Association for Adult Continuing Education (1990), American Association for Adult Continuing Education (1989), Vocational Administrators of Pennsylvania (1989) and National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (1989, 1990). Such presentations were well-attended, suggesting an interest in this kind of programming both at the state and national level.

A dissemination manual was produced along with the final report to provide practitioners with a condensed description of the key components of the program and materials found useful to it. Plans for future dissemination include publication of articles in recognized journals in the fields of adult education, special education, and vocational education, such as Journal of Vocational Education Research, Journal of Industrial Teacher Education, Adult Basic Education, and Journal of Learning Disabilities.

Project Evaluation Activities

Most data pertaining to outcomes of specific goals is reported in the section of this report describing service delivery accomplishments. This section will describe processes and procedures used to collect data and report summative evaluation data not described elsewhere in this document.

Ongoing Data Collection and Formative Evaluation

The project was evaluated internally employing a number of quantitative and qualitative measures to assess attainment of goals. Student progress during the training period was assessed numerically through pre and post

administration of a communications and interpersonal skills assessment modified for this project, through pre and post administration of a self-concept measure (The Adjective Checklist), and grade reports from each semester. Records were kept by the project coordinator regarding individual student's utilization of basic skills training, content tutoring, and study skills counseling. She also maintained a weekly schedule recording individual assignments to group sessions on life-coping skills and job search and maintenance skills. Students gave periodic formative feedback during these sessions regarding the value of content, with their suggestions providing new directions in some cases.

During the job follow-up phase student performance was rated monthly by employers, with a written feedback form serving as a record to chart individual growth and development. Anecdotal records were also kept regarding information about workplace performance or satisfaction offered by the former students, the placement counselor, or employer.

Student Interviews

Exit interviews were completed with 19 students who completed the training phase of the program during the second year. This group included four students who participated in the training program for both years. These interviews utilized an open-ended format and were conducted by one of the project directors and the project assistant, both of whom students had little contact with prior to the interviews with the exception of assessments completed at the time of program entry.

A number of questions focused on the students' experiences within the vocational classroom. When asked if their vocational teachers appeared to understand their needs as adults only one students gave a decidedly negative reply. One person noted that the teacher did nothing special for adults, while

another indicated her teacher did not immediately understand these needs, but learned more as their interaction continued. The great majority (73%) of students also felt their teachers also understood their learning disabilities, making an effort to give extra help when needed or to make testing accommodations. Among the four students not giving a totally affirmative response, one noted that the teacher learned about his needs with time and another reported he experienced no need for extra help or special consideration in the classroom. Sixty-four percent of the students in intergenerational classes also reported no problems with operating in an intergenerational classroom setting. Several noted they felt no different from the other students because they weren't that different in age, while some older students reported they found it easy to get along with everyone or that they enjoyed being role models for younger students. Of the six who encountered some adjustment problems interacting with younger students, only one reported that the age-mix continued to bother him throughout the training period. One of the five experiencing a change in attitude attributed the change to the growth of the younger students, others merely noted that the younger students didn't seem as bothersome after a while.

The remaining interview questions focused on their perceptions of the STRIDE program, including its benefits and suggestions for improvement. The majority of their comments about benefits of the program focused on the opportunity to get free training in a desired area of vocational competence. Other benefits described included: increased self-confidence, tutoring, work co-op experience, learning about job seeking, and learning to communicate effectively with the younger people in the program. When asked about the particular value of the group sessions five of the nineteen students (26%) either attended few sessions or found them of limited value. Two noted they had

acquired the information or skills previously through school, training programs, and home rearing; one preferred working with the coordinator individually due to her nervousness about groups. Of the 14 students who found these sessions valuable, 10 focused their comments on the self-confidence and interpersonal gains coming from interacting in the group with others who shared similar problems. Three focused specifically on what they learned about getting and keeping jobs. When asked to make suggestions for improving the program or the group sessions, the majority (63%) could think of no suggestions for change. The suggestions that were made included: 1) a shorter day, 2) more adults, 3) greater travel support, 4) more time on life skills, 5) more timely access to books-on-tape, and 6) more time on a specific job skill.

When asked the most valuable thing they learned as a result of participating in the project, students were about evenly split between a focus on skill development (vocational and basic skills) and a focus on personal development. One man reported that for the first time he knew there was a reason why he always had trouble in school -- his learning disabilities, identified through evaluation for the program. A young woman noted, "[The program] tries to make you more independent. Hopefully you get there. It helps me see my goals more clearly." An older woman learned "not to have to worry about people putting you down because of the problem." She was also pleased to have learned how to explain her learning disabilities to an employer. Finally, in the words of one young woman, "I can learn like everyone else. It just takes me a little longer."

Teacher Interviews

The reaction of staff was also perceived as an important evaluative variable, given the basic premise of the project STRIDE model that mildly handicapped

adults could be provided effective transitional training and employment within an ongoing secondary vocational educational facility. If the staff were not supportive of the concept, if they did not believe it was viable, the model would be in question. The reaction of teachers was particularly important considering that in a majority of cases, the class was made up primarily of high school students. In order to assess staff reaction all vocational education teachers who had STRIDE clients were interviewed by the project staff using a semi-structured interview format.

Ten different AAVTS teachers had STRIDE students in their classes. Trade areas included welding, carpentry, auto body, industrial electricity, air conditioning, cosmetology, marketing, warehousing, food service and electro-mechanical technology. Two of the instructors were women. Eight of the ten had fifteen or more years of teaching experience.

Faculty were asked if they were apprehensive about having adults in their class. As it turned out all but three had previous experience teaching adults and thus were not apprehensive. Those who had no previous experience reported being somewhat apprehensive. This apprehension centered around whether adults would be a positive or negative influence in class and whether their expectations for adults should be different.

Faculty were asked about their overall reaction to having STRIDE adults in their class. The consensus was that these adults usually served as a positive role model, promoted better discipline, promoted better overall learning, were cooperative, had better attendance, were more committed to learning and often provided help and encouragement to younger students.

Faculty were asked to identify additional assistance and support STRIDE adults seemed to require. Their responses varied according to the basic skills ability of the STRIDE adult(s) the teacher had contact with. All instructors

reported that having a project coordinator who supported and counseled the students was important. Additionally, some needed varying levels of both basic skills remediation and specific vocational subject matter tutoring.

Service Delivery Accomplishments

Project Objectives (Year 1)

1. To establish linkages with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the local public school district and the Intermediate Unit to facilitate recruitment of graduating learning disabled seniors who have not received vocational training and young adults who have recently left school.

Year 1 Activities:

Upon notification of funding, the first priority was to establish linkages with local school systems, Intermediate Unit 08 (IU08), the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and other relevant groups to facilitate recruitment. A meeting was held in July, 1988 to begin the process. Representatives of these groups, along with representatives of business and industry, formed the core of the project advisory committee. The committee met periodically throughout the year.

Year 1 Results/Findings:

Linkages need to be established in the Spring and not over the summer, due to schedules of personnel in the school districts.

Year 2 Activities:

Local school systems, IU08, and the OVR continued to work with the program during Year 2. The Altoona Area School District provided psychological testing services. In addition, two programs located in the Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School provided referrals for this project. These were Project Change, which is a single parent/displaced homemaker program, and the Ninth Grade At-Risk Program. Intermediate Unit 08 assisted in obtaining student records and documentation of handicap, and also assisted with recruitment. The OVR assisted with counseling and placement. OVR also supplied students with materials needed for the training phase of the project. The school district, IU08, and OVR each provided an advisory council member during Year 2. Other agencies also worked with the project during Year 2. Local adult basic education and GED programs assisted in recruitment of students. The local literacy program assisted with recruitment, provided literacy tutoring for some project participants, and provided a volunteer to tape a textbook for a non-reading participant. The local JTPA program provided information and summer employment for project participants (related to the vocational training area). Bedford County PEAK (a single parent/displaced homemaker program) provided referrals. SKILLS of Central Pennsylvania and the Altoona Rehabilitation Hospital provided information. Representatives from these two groups also served as advisory council members.

Year 2 Results/Findings: After the project had been in place for several months, project staff were able to extend outreach activities and involve more agencies in recruitment for Year 2.

Products: DNA (Does not apply)

2. To recruit at least 25-30 participants to be trained during the year 1988-1989 and 30 participants to be trained during the 1989-90 academic year.

Year 1 Activities:

A. Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Prior to the time that the onsite coordinator joined the project, the Project Management Team met with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation counselors to determine need in the area. Four names were given at that time. The onsite coordinator initially contacted the OVR office the third week of July, 1988.

B. Local School Districts. The onsite coordinator sent a letter to all area high school principals to be mailed to all previously enrolled learning disabled students. This was a problem in some districts because although the information was passed to the guidance departments, counselors were not in the schools until the end of August, 1988. In the Altoona Area School District, program information was sent to all learning disabled students who had graduated or dropped out in the three previous years and were unemployed or employed part time.

C. Intermediate Unit 8. The coordinator mailed printed information to all IU08 supervisors, and followed up with a phone call. She met with two supervisors to talk more about the project and potential candidates, and provided materials to mail to the candidates. She worked with a third supervisor on developing contacts in the Hollidaysburg area, and met with several of the local LD resource teachers to explain the project and give them information to pass on to former students.

D. Other Activities. Contacts made in addition to OVR, IU08, and the school districts included: an article placed in the Altoona Mirror (local newspaper);

press releases sent to the radio stations, television stations, and newspapers; information sent to social service agencies; meetings with local ABE/GED and literacy program coordinators. Difficulties in recruiting included the fact that staff of many relevant service agencies were out of their offices over the summer, and linkages with these agencies could not be developed early; employment in the area was high and people were not seeking training; and, the on-site coordinator was not hired until mid-July, 1988.

Year 1 Results: Forty-two individuals requested information about the program (25 male, 17 female). Source of referrals were: high schools (6); IU08 (4); OVR/Encouragement Place (Encouragement Place is a privately run psychological service) (5); another student (2); social service agencies (2); word of mouth (1); newspaper article (17); adult literacy program (1); ABE program (2); and Vo-Tech classes (2); . The age of those inquiring ranged from 17-44. Seventeen of the males inquiring were age 26 or under; eight of the females inquiring were age 28 or older. Twenty-three individuals went through vocational assessment (15 male and 8 female); all were Caucasian (the area has a low percentage minority population). Their ages ranged from 17-44; all but four males participating were age 23 or under; women's ages ranged from 18-38. Sixteen males and five females had ITP's developed. Most males who began the program were age 19 or below; women who began the program were between ages 18 and 38. Diagnoses of learning disability came from: school/IU (13 males, 3 females); OVR (1 male and 1 female); and Encouragement Place (3 males and 1 female). In all, seventeen students began the program.

Year 1 Findings:

1. Because of the rural nature of the area, restricting services to the LD population made it difficult to reach full enrollment capacity, especially in times of high employment.
2. Some potential clients were interested in the program but could not attend full time; they needed the income to support a family or to help at home, but needed training to obtain a promotion or a higher paying job.
3. Social service agencies and the school district seemed to overestimate the numbers of clients needing services; many clients had already been directed to other programs.
4. Of all recruitment efforts, the newspaper article drew the most responses.
5. Several adults, not previously identified as learning disabled, responded to the article, saying that they had always had trouble in school and wondered if they might be learning disabled. These adults were often relieved to finally know why they could not learn.
6. Reasons given for not enrolling included: could not afford to go to school full time; employment opportunities were more enticing than training; not learning disabled; wanted training not offered at the Vo-Tech; not sure of goals; moved from area; and poor health.

Year 1 Recommendations:

1. The project needs to be more broadly defined in terms of the population it serves; it could potentially serve other mildly handicapped individuals, due to the rural area and the low number of interested learning disabled adults.
2. Project staff need to develop a model for individuals who cannot attend full time.

3. Recruitment needs to be an ongoing process; it must interface with procedures for informing graduating high school seniors of options for continuing their education.

Year 2 Activities:

A. Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The onsite coordinator, Ms. Pat Frazier, and Mrs. Edith Isacke, Director of the Altoona AVTS, presented an informational program to the district workshop of OVR counselors (covered a four county area).

B. LEA's. In 1989, the onsite coordinator visited guidance counselors in a two county area, sharing information on the project and distributing referral packets. Other counselors were sent referral information.

C. Intermediate Unit 8. A letter was sent to personnel to update them on the project. Referral packets were included with the letter. Visits were made to resource room teachers. The onsite coordinator also represented the project at transition meetings for several students who were directed to vocational training.

D. Other Activities. Letters which explained the project were sent to 140 social service agencies and churches which might have had contact with eligible individuals. Information was sent to the SKILLS agency, and the Advantage Director and representative of a Supported Employment Component were contacted. Communication with the ABE/JTPA programs and the local literacy program was maintained. The onsite coordinator arranged for the area Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDAA, formerly ACLD) to hold a meeting at Altoona AVTS. Two informational brochures, one for students and one for business and the community, were developed. Brochures were mailed to area agencies and housing projects. A luncheon and panel discussion with

students and teachers was held in April, 1989, with Pennsylvania First Lady Ellen Casey as guest of honor. Representatives of local education and social agencies were invited to hear about the project. The meeting and project were publicized by the local media. Assessment activities for year two clients began during summer 1989. The ability to begin recruitment and assessment activities for Year 2 clients at that time allowed project staff to perform these activities more thoroughly.

Year 2 Results: Forty-eight individuals requested information about the program (29 male, 19 female). Source of referrals were: LEA's (1); IU08 (8); OVR (12); social service agencies (4); media (16); adult literacy program (3); ABE program/JTPA (3); SKILLS (1). The age of those inquiring ranged from 16 to 49. Twenty-seven individuals went through vocational assessment (19 male and 8 female); all were Caucasian. Their ages ranged from 16-49. Seventeen males and 7 females had ITP's developed. Most males who began the program were age 18-20; most women who began the program were age 18-20. Diagnoses of learning disability came from: schools/IU08 (12); Encouragement Place (12). Twenty-two new students began the training program during Year 2. Four Year 1 students continued for the second year.

Year 2 Findings

As in Year 1, recruitment through the media resulted in the most requests for information.

Products: DNA

3. To obtain from each participant who has been out of school two or more years a detailed employment history, indicating jobs held, duration of employment, previous vocational training, positive and negative work experiences as a basis for follow up comparison.

Year 1 and 2 Activities: Anecdotal work history record sheets were developed and filled out by the adult students in a group setting in October. Through these worksheets, project staff were able to get rather detailed anecdotal information on clients' work histories.

Year 1 Results/Findings: The older population found good jobs easily when they were younger because at that time, many jobs did not require reading or technical skill. Once their most recent jobs ended, they were unable to compete for other jobs because of their lack of academic skills, inability to find retraining programs, or insufficient job search skills. After years of unproductive job search, they lacked self-esteem. The older students, although somewhat unmotivated at the onset of the program, became enthusiastic workers, often overcoming great odds to be in school daily. Younger males out of school for at least two years, with or without previous vocational training, had poor work histories. Indications were that these young men suffered periods of unemployment due to lack of interpersonal skills as much as a lack of job skills. Re-entry to training at this time may indicate a stage of maturity that will enable them to become gainfully employed. Women clients generally had less work experience than men. Some had not worked at all; for example, several were returning to work after being homemakers.

Year 2 Results/Findings:

Most students in the program (males and females under age 20) had little or no previous work experience. The older men in the project had done manual labor. They lost jobs because of accidents, inability to get along with their employers, or due to problems performing job tasks efficiently. The older women in the project had patchy work experience and were trying to re-enter the workforce after becoming wives or mothers.

Recommendations:

Older clients need job-related basic skills and basic academic skills, while younger clients need interpersonal skills in addition to basic skills.

Products: Project STRIDE work history record sheet.

4. To provide vocational assessment, exploration, and counseling.

Year 1 Activities: All students completed Singer work stations. Each student participated in four exploratory sessions of specific occupational training programs offered at Altoona AVTS. The exploratory sessions they participated in were chosen on the basis of stated interests and results of the Singer Evaluations. Each student was able to consider his or her Singer results, exploratory sessions, and any other factors and discuss these with the project coordinator and project director in choosing a vocational training area. In cases where the student was undecided or unrealistic, the Altoona AVTS guidance counselors were available for consultation. Guidance counselors

were also able to recommend some training areas over others in cases where academic strengths or weaknesses might be a factor.

Year 1 Results: Nine students had definite preferences for type of training, which were supported by their Singer results. One female student was undecided between two fields. Singer results enabled her to choose an area. Five students had little or no idea of interests. The Singer helped to pinpoint their interests and abilities and helped them decide on a vocational area. One student had decided upon a field but the Singer evaluations indicated a lack of aptitude in that area. The student was directed toward a more realistic career.

Year 2 Activities: All students but one completed Singer work stations. This student was placed by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Picture interest results and stated interest determined which Singer stations students completed. Students were placed in vocational areas on the basis of Singer results.

Year 2 Results: For twelve students, stated interests matched the results of the Singer stations. For two students, stated interests and Singer results were not matched. These students were placed in the vocational area in which they stated interest.

Findings:

1. Many adults coming into training have clear occupational preferences; most of these were supported by results of the Singer Occupational Assessment.
2. The Singer helped some clients to realize stronger preferences for vocational training.

Recommendations:

The assessment phase must have a strong basic academic skills component. Many areas require a high level of academic ability and without this information a student could be placed in an inappropriate area.

Products: DNA

5. To design with and for each participant an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) detailing the plan for his or her participation in an identified vocational training program, basic skills instruction, life coping skills instruction and ongoing educational counseling.

Year 1 Activities: An ITP, which used information from several sources, was developed at the beginning of Year 1. Students' placement in life-coping skills was determined by pre-tests administered by the project assistant. The need for instruction in job-specific academic skills was determined by class performance. Basic academic skills remediation was determined by testing, the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery, and previous evaluations. An evaluation summary of psychological and educational testing was used to determine learning strengths and weaknesses and incorporated into the ITP. Recommendations for instructional strategies were drawn from this evaluation summary and passed onto teachers. The first ITP meeting, held at the beginning of the year, included the project director, the onsite coordinator, the student, and in some cases a parent or spouse. It was determined that the ITP's needed to be revised to be more comprehensive and provide proper placement and planning for transition. The ITP form was revised, based on materials from

the Blair County Transition Task Force, commercial materials, and model materials obtained at the director's meeting in Washington. Revised ITP forms were completed for all students. ITP meetings occurred throughout the year as needed, and at the end of the training phase to determine plans for employment. The last formal ITP meeting for each student was scheduled after the student met with the co-op placement team to decide appropriate placement. The placement counselor attended meetings that occurred at the end of the training phase.

Year 1 Results/Findings: The unique needs of project STRIDE made it necessary to revise the ITP format that was proposed for use in the beginning of the project.

Year 2 Activities: Development of ITP's occurred on a more informal basis during Year 2. Counseling sessions with students were held during the early part of the year to plan components of individual programs in terms of training and support services. Counseling sessions were held throughout the year as needed to modify these individual programs, based on input from individual students and instructors.

Year 2 Results/Findings: Individual needs of students dictated the number of and times of ITP meetings. A single model for timing and structure of ITP meetings did not seem appropriate.

Products: STRIDE ITP

6. To provide training to each participant, in either an intergenerational or adult vocational training program offered at Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School. The training goal will be met if at least 80% of those beginning a training program complete it.

Year 1 Activities: None of the clients desired placement in any of the adult programs offered at Altoona AVTS; therefore, all students were placed in intergenerational classes (class includes both secondary and adult students). Areas of placement were: Carpentry (2); Auto Mechanics (1); Auto Body Repair (2); Welding (1); Food Service (3); Graphic Arts (1); Health Assistance (2); Basic Industrial Electricity (2); Cosmetology (1); Interior Design (1); Computer Programming/Information Processing (1).

Year 1 Results: Only three of the seventeen clients who had ITP's developed and were placed in intergenerational programs withdrew from training. Eighty-two percent of those who began a training program completed it.

Year 1 Findings:

1. Training of clients in intergenerational settings has proven to be extremely successful; the instructional pace in this setting is compatible with the learning ability of the clients.
2. It appears that the adult students have experienced improved self-concept as a result of the intergenerational setting; the adults appear to serve as role models for secondary students.

Year 1 Recommendations:

1. Explore further the benefits of intergenerational education for the mildly handicapped.

Year 2 Activities: All students except two were placed in intergenerational classes. These students were placed in Electro-mechanical Technology, an adult class. Areas of placement were: Industrial Electricity (2); Air Conditioning (2); Welding (4); Food Service, (6); Auto Body Repair (1); Auto Mechanics (1); Marketing/Distributive Education (1); Warehouse Services (2); Carpentry (2); Cosmetology (1); Electro-mechanical Technology (2); Information Processing (1). The effects of instruction in an intergenerational setting were explored. Changes in self-concept among STRIDE students from the beginning to the end of the project were measured with the Adjective Check List (Gough, 1984). Relationships among STRIDE students, secondary students, and other adult students were explored via a sociometric questionnaire. These activities are further described under objectives 16 and 18, respectively.

Year 2 Results: Five of the 26 adults placed or continuing in vocational training programs during Year 2 (four Year 1 students returned for further training) did not complete their programs. This is an 81% completion rate.

Year 2 Findings: Changes in self-concept from the beginning to the end of the project were measured by the Adjective Check List (see objective 16). Pretesting revealed that self-concept, as measured by the Adjective Check List, was in the normal range for the students who participated in the project. Only eight students over the two years of the project scored below average on any subscale on the pretest. Of these eight, five showed movement into the average

range when retested at the end of the training phase. Two students showed no improvement, while posttest scores were not available for one student. The self-concept of five of these students improved over the course of the project. However, we found little empirical support for initial impressions that STRIDE adults served as role models for secondary students. Results of the sociometric questionnaire (see objective 18) indicated that secondary students tended to select other secondary students in their class as individuals whom they would choose for help with school and personal problems and to spend free time with.

Products: DNA

7. To provide vocational training and counseling to enable each participant to master at least 80% of the job competencies identified for inclusion in his or her Individual Transition Plan.

Year 1 and 2 Activities: Students received vocational instruction in their chosen field. Tutoring and support services were offered on an individual basis to assist the student in obtaining the competencies in his or her shop.

Year 1 Results: The performance of clients ranged from good to excellent. Final grades for year one students were as follows: 91-100% (3); 81-90% (8); 71-80% (2). Three students withdrew from training for the following reasons: serious illness (1); employment opportunities (2).

Year 1 Findings/Recommendations: Although support services were necessary in helping some students obtain competency, not all students require

assistance to obtain competency. Support services should be individualized and increased to include tutors who can help in the specific content areas.

Year 2 Results: The performance of clients ranged from good to excellent. Final grades for Year 2 students are as follows: 91-100% (4); 81-90% (12); 71-80% (4). Five students left the program during the course of the year. Three left because they got jobs; the other two left due to personal problems.

Year 2 Findings: During Year 2, need for additional academic support (i.e., study skills) was identified among students with and without basic skills deficiencies.

Products: DNA

8. To provide educational assessment to determine current academic strengths and weaknesses related to job training and performance, including reading level and mathematics level.

Year 1 and 2 Activities:

A. Reading level/Life-coping skills. The letter-word identification, word attack, and passage comprehension subtests of the Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery were administered to determine grade level performance in the reading cluster. In addition, criterion-referenced measures were developed during Year 1 and administered to establish a pre-training baseline for job-related life-coping and communication skills. The communications skills and interpersonal skills tests used to assess job-related

life-coping and communications skills of project participants were adapted from communications skills and interpersonal skills performance tests previously developed (Greenan & Powell, 1985; Greenan & Winters, 1986) to assess and prescribe instruction in generalizable communication and interpersonal skills. Greenan (1983) describes the skills, their selection and validation. Three changes were made in order to adapt the existing communications skills and interpersonal skills tests for the learning disabled adults participating in the project.

1. A subset of the skills from each test, and the items testing each skill, were selected. This was done to cut administration time, and because of the wide variety of occupational areas in which the adult students could enroll. The skills selected for the final version of the test were those applicable to entry level positions in each of the five occupational clusters. The selection process was a joint effort of the project director, the onsite coordinator, and the project assistant, with the final selection made by the project assistant.
2. Some items were simplified in wording and content.
3. The interpersonal skills test was changed from an open-ended format to a multiple choice format, based on suggestions made by the onsite coordinator.

The testing was done in late October and early November of both years. Both tests were administered in one two-hour session. Students were tested in small groups or individually. Students were expected to work independently on the tests. If items were read to students, (some students were unable to read the test) it was noted on the student's score sheet for the communications skills test. The results of both tests were used to group students for instruction in job-specific communications skills and interpersonal skills. Results of the testing determined group placement and content. Both of these measures were re-

administered when students complete the classroom training phase of the project.

B. Mathematics level. The calculation and applied problem subtests of the Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery were administered to determine grade level performance in the mathematics cluster.

Year 1 Results:

A. Reading level/Life-coping skills.

Woodcock Reading Cluster (grade level) for 9 Year 1 students who completed training **and** were administered the Woodcock.

mean=6.96

standard deviation=3.34

range=1.9 - 12.9

Interpersonal Skills Tests (Results for students who completed training program); H = high, A = average, L = low

Student	Score on Pretest	Score on Posttest
1	A	H
2	A	A
3	A	A
4	H	--
5	A	H
6	A	A
7	A	H
8	A	H
9	A	H

10	H	A
11	A	A
12	A	H
13	A	A
14	A	A

On the pretest for Interpersonal Skills, 12 students scored in the average range while 2 students scored in the high range. On the posttest, 7 students scored in the average range, while 6 scored in the high range (1 student did not retake the test). Six students improved their scores from average to high between pre- and posttesting, while the scores of 6 students remained the same. One student's score dropped from high to average from pre- to posttesting.

Communication Skills Tests (Results for students who completed training program); H = high, A = average, L = low, NR = non-reader

Student	Score on Pretest	Score on Posttest
1	H	H
2	A	H
3	NR	NR
4	H	--
5	H	H
6	A	A
7	H	H
8	H	H
9	A	A
10	NR	NR

11	NR	NR
12	H	A
13	A	H
14	H	H

On the Communications Skills pretest, 4 students scored in the average range while 7 students scored in the high range. Three non-readers (NR) could not complete the test. On the posttest, 3 students scored in the average range, while 7 scored in the high range (the 3 non-readers did not complete the test, and 1 student did not retake the test). Two students improved their scores from average to high between pre- and posttesting, while the scores of ten students (including non-readers) remained the same. One student's score dropped from high to average from pre- to posttesting.

B. Math level.

Woodcock Math Cluster (grade level) for 9 Year 1 students who completed training **and** were administered the Woodcock.

mean=6.88

standard deviation=3.24

range=2.8 - 12.9

Year 1 Findings:

1. Most students needed more help with interpersonal skills than communications skills. The results of the Woodcock indicate that there were great individual differences in reading skills.
2. Instruction aimed at improving students' interpersonal skills was successful.
3. There were, as with reading skills, wide individual differences on math skills.

4. Because reading and mathematics abilities and skill requirements associated with particular training programs were considered in selecting occupational areas, math and reading did not prove to be as much of a hindrance in the program as anticipated.

Year 2 Results:

A. Reading level/Life-coping skills.

Woodcock Reading Cluster (grade level) for 15 Year 2 students who completed training **and** were administered the Woodcock.

mean=6.35

standard deviation=3.68

range=2.2 - 12.9

Interpersonal Skills Tests (Results for students who completed training program); H = high, A = average, L = low

Student	Score on Pretest	Score on Posttest
1	A	H
2	A	A
3	A	H
4	A	H
5	A	A
6	A	H
7	A	A
8	A	H
9	A	H
10	H	A

11	A	--
12	A	A
13	A	A
14	H	H
15	H	H
16	H	H
17	H	H
18 (cont. from Yr 1)	--	--
19 (cont. from Yr 1)	--	A
20 (cont. from Yr 1)	--	A
21 (cont. from Yr 1)	H	A

On the pretest for Interpersonal Skills, 12 students scored in the average range while 6 students scored in the high range. Three students (returning from Year 1) did not take the pretest. On the posttest, 8 students scored in the average range, while 11 scored in the high range (2 students did not retake the test). Six students improved their scores from average to high between pre- and posttesting, while the scores of 9 students remained the same. Two students' scores dropped from high to average from pre- to posttesting. Four students did not take the pretest or the posttest. Of the four students returning from Year 1, one raised his score from average to high between the posttest at Year 1 and the posttest at Year 2. Two students received average scores on both Year 1 and Year 2 posttests, thus showing no change in performance during Year 2. The fourth student did not complete the Interpersonal Skills test during Year 2.

Communication Skills Tests (Results for students who completed training program); H = high, A = average, L = low, NR = non-reader

Student	Score on Pretest	Score on Posttest
1	H	H
2	A	H
3	A	H
4	H	H
5	NR	NR
6	A	H
7	H	H
8	A	A
9	A	H
10	A	A
11	A	--
12	H	A
13	A	L
14	H	H
15	H	H
16	H	H
17	A	A
18 (cont. from Yr 1)	--	NR
19 (cont. from Yr 1)	--	--
20 (cont. from Yr 1)	--	A
21 (cont. from Yr 1)	H	H

On the pretest for Communications Skills, nine students scored in the average range while eight students scored in the high range. One student (a non-reader) did not complete the test. Three students (returning from Year 1) did not take the pretest. On the posttest, one student scored in the low range, five students scored in the average range, and 11 scored in the high range. Two non-readers did not complete the test, and two students did not retake the test. Four students improved their scores from average to high between pre- and posttesting, while the scores of 11 students (including on non-reader) remained the same. One student's score dropped from high to average, while another student's score dropped from average to low, from pre- to posttesting. Four students did not take either the pretest or the posttest. Of the four students returning from Year 1, one student received high scores on both Year 1 and Year 2 posttests, thus showing no change in performance during Year 2. One non-reader did not complete the Communications Skills posttest either year. One student's performance on the Communications Skills test dropped from high to average during that time. One student did not complete the Year 2 posttest.

B. Math level.

Woodcock Math Cluster (grade level) for 15 Year 2 students who completed training **and** were administered the Woodcock.

mean=8.31

standard deviation=3.16

range=2.6 - 12.9

Year 2 Findings:

1. Year 2 students showed greater weakness in job-related communication skills than Year 1 students. The results of the Woodcock indicate that, as with the Year 1 group, this group exhibits mid-level reading skills. Again, there are great individual differences in reading ability.
2. Math is slightly less of a problem area than reading among this group, as a whole. Math skills are high-average; there are, however, wide individual differences in math skills.
3. Instruction during Year 2 aimed at improving students' interpersonal skills was successful.
4. The STRIDE program was less successful in improving **general** job-related communication skills.

Products: Adapted Communications Skills and Interpersonal Skills Tests

9. To select or design/develop appropriate instructional materials which can be used by participants to improve work-related basic academic skills.

Year 1 Activities: Tracking of in-class performance revealed that three students in food service needed additional instruction in job-specific vocabulary skills. The onsite coordinator developed exercises and used class textbooks to provide instruction in job-specific vocabulary skills. Three students in food service were also found to require instruction in handling money. Materials used for remedial math instruction included Menu Math (Johnson & Scharf, Remedial Publications, 1980); Basic Skills in Using Banks (Mackenzie,

Opportunities for Learning, 1988); and Basic Skills in Shopping, (Young, Opportunities for Learning, 1988). Clients were sent as needed to ARM (Assessment and Remediation for Mainstreaming) for work on specific math competencies as needed by the shop area. Results of the Woodcock reading skills cluster and the life-coping/job-related communications skills test indicated that three students needed help with basic reading skills before they could successfully work on improving job-specific basic skills. These individuals used the Caldwell Reading Program, which provides individualized instruction in basic reading skills.

Year 2 Activities: During Year 2, pretesting and in-class performance revealed that six students needed supplementary activities to improve work-related reading skills. These students were reading at or below the fourth grade reading level. Three of these students were enrolled in the Food Service class, while one was enrolled in Industrial Electricity. Both of these vocational classes required fairly sophisticated reading skills. The other two students were reading below the 3rd grade level and wished to improve their reading skills. Students who were found to be reading at the 0-2 reading level were assisted by the project coordinator in using supplementary materials to help them improve basic reading skills. These materials included the Caldwell Reading Program (Caldwell Educational Associates), Starting Over (Educator's Publishing Service, Inc.), and Smart Eyes (Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.). Students reading at the 2-4 grade level were assisted by the project coordinator in using Reading for Today/Communication for Today (Steck-Vaughn). One student enrolled in Warehouse Services needed additional assistance in work-related math. He also worked with the project coordinator, who tutored him in calculating percentages for discounts and taxes.

Results/Findings: A variety of materials are needed to meet specialized student needs. Many materials available through publishers can be used to address general basic skills deficits. Remediation of job-specific basic skills requires use of more applied materials.

Products: DNA

10. To provide individualized and group instruction for at least two hours per week for each participant aimed at improving basic skills specifically as they relate to vocational development, including work-related basic academic, life-coping, and job-seeking skills.

Year 1 Activities:

A. Reading and Math. The results of testing showed that not all students required job-specific academic instruction. Students were targeted for additional instruction in reading skills based on their scores on the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery. Three students were found to have reading skills below the second grade level, based on the results of the Woodcock, and were given individual remedial instruction to raise their reading levels before beginning job-specific instruction. These students were placed in the Caldwell Reading Program. During Year 1, ten students were assigned math remediation in the computer lab of Altoona AVTS, based on their scores on the Woodcock and observed need for improved math skills in their vocational classrooms. Students worked individually in the math lab on upgrading math skills. Mathematics software in the computer lab was used to

establish a pre-training baseline for mathematics competencies, including decimal fractions and common fractions. These measures were re-administered individually when students completed work in the math lab. Of those ten sent to the math lab, three did not obtain the required level of competency. The project coordinator provided further individualized instruction for these students. Four students in Food Service were found to be lacking in survival math skills. The project coordinator worked with them individually, focusing on money skills and job-specific math.

B. Life Coping Skills. Life-coping skills instruction was done in a group setting, led by the project coordinator. Placement in the life-coping groups was determined in part by the pretest administered by the project assistant which assessed job related communication and life-coping skills. Content of some of the classes was based on the results of the test. Students were surveyed in life-coping groups using questions from a survey done by Hoffman and others (1987) to determine the needs of learning disabled adults. The results were used to determine content for some of the life-coping skills classes covering the areas of self-esteem, self-acceptance, goal-setting, decision-making, personal needs, communication skills, attendance and punctuality, and interpersonal skills.

C. Job-Seeking Skills. During the second semester, the groups worked on developing better job seeking skills. This was done through group activities such as interviewing each other and critiquing each other, filling out applications, recording work histories and inventorying skills used on each job, using software to develop skills in applying for jobs, interviewing, employer expectations, and job-keeping skills.

Year 1 Findings:

1. Instruction and support in job-related academics must be specific to the individual and the occupational area.

2. Instruction in life-coping and job-seeking skills can be accomplished in a group setting. Students found group work in these areas to be very rewarding.

3. There must be a planned transition to school for those adults who have been out of school for several years.

Year 1 Recommendations:

1. It is necessary to seek resources to increase individual support of instruction in training programs.

2. Students could be helped with transition to school by offering summer sessions covering areas such as goal-setting, self-esteem and study skills.

3. When multiple disabilities exist, remedial help should begin over the summer.

Year 2 Activities:

A. Reading and Math. Pretesting and in-class performance revealed that many of the students did not need assistance in work-related basic academic skills. Reading needs were determined by the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery and performance in the vocational classroom. Six students were found to need supplementary activities to improve work-related reading skills. These students were reading at or below the fourth grade reading level. Three of these students were enrolled in the Food Service class, while one was enrolled in Industrial Electricity. Both of these vocational classes required fairly sophisticated reading skills. The other two students were reading below the 3rd grade level and wished to improve their reading skills. Instruction was provided to these students on an individual basis. These students worked

individually with the onsite coordinator 1-2 times per week, as their schedules permitted. Eleven students were found to need assistance in mathematics, based on scores on the Woodcock and other previously administered achievement tests, and their inability to perform math skills needed in their vocational classroom. These students were assigned to the CAI lab, to work individually on developing math skills. The on-site coordinator also worked with one student in warehouse services to help him improve vocational math skills.

B. Life Coping Skills. Life-coping skills instruction was done in a group setting. Using the pretesting results from the assessment of life-coping skills, it was discovered that major weakness for this group was in relating to others as a member of a team, and their ability to work with others. To develop skills in this area, human relations techniques were taught. These covered areas such as handling personality differences, understanding and accepting one's self, developing tolerance and understanding intolerance, and coping with fear and anger. Vocational instructors were also aware of the weakness and worked on interpersonal relations as a vocational goal. Students were surveyed in life-coping groups using questions from a survey done by Hoffman and others (1987) to determine the needs of learning disabled adults. The results were used to determine content for some of the life-coping skills classes covering the areas of self-esteem, self-acceptance, goal-setting, decision-making, personal needs, communication skills, attendance and punctuality, and interpersonal skills. Materials used in life-coping skills groups included Life SkillsTalking, Listening, Communicating, (Pro-Ed), and Job Survival Skills (Educational Design, Inc.). These groups met one time per week (in order to accommodate the schedules of the students) during the first semester.

C. Job-Seeking Skills. During the second semester groups worked on developing better job seeking skills. The same activities used during Year 1

were carried out with the Year 2 group. Materials that were added to this component during Year 2 included: The Worker Series (Media Materials Inc.), and The Work Book, Getting the Job You Want (Glenco Publishing Company). These groups met one time per week (in order to accommodate the schedules of the students) during the second semester.

D. Study Skills. This was a component added during Year 2. After grades for the first nine week marking period were issued, eight students were found to have grades of 83% or lower. These students were enrolled in a study skills class. This group met two times per week over the next nine week marking period. Five had improved their grades at the end of that nine week marking period. Materials used in the study skills class included Survival Listening Skills (J. Weston Walch Publisher), Shortcuts to Learning (J. Weston Walch, Publisher), Building Memory Skills (MCE), Test Taking Made Easy (MCE), and Self-exploration Series, Series #3 Study Skills (Careers).

Year 2 Findings:

1. A study skills component was found to be needed by, and was added during Year 2, for Year 2 students.
2. During Year 2, 15 students required and received individual-or group-based instructional support in reading, math, or study skills.

Products: DNA

11. To provide staff activities to improve vocational education instructors' a) knowledge of characteristics of learning disabilities

and b) knowledge and utilization of compensatory strategies which may be used by or with the learning disabled worker.

Year 1 Activities: A series of five half-day workshops were presented by an Intermediate Unit 08 Supervisor entitled, "ADAPT: A Developmental Activity Program for Teachers", developed by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit in Pittsburgh, PA. It guides staff in ways to adapt curricula for learning disabled adults and improve instruction directed to those adults, providing a process for assessing the learning needs of students and for adapting textbooks and materials. Each teacher completed a teaching style inventory during the sessions. Teachers were also directed through a series of activities to help them identify with the disabilities typical of many learning disabled students.

Year 1 Results/Findings: Teachers indicated informally to the onsite coordinator (during conversations) that they found this information to be helpful.

Year 2 Activities: There was ongoing communication between the onsite coordinator and teachers during year 2. A formal in-service was held in November 1989, with teachers, led by project staff, to discuss adult learners and needs of teachers in assisting learning disabled adults. Video tapes were ordered for teachers to view as needed, including Working with Learning Disabled Adults; Faculty Training; Parent-teacher Meeting; and Social Skills (all produced by Learning Disabilities Consultants, Bryn Mawr, PA). Other supplemental materials were distributed to teachers to provide them with more information. These included: Supervising Adults With Learning Disabilities (President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped), and L.D.

Problems and Instructional Adjustments Menu (Appalachian Intermediate Unit 08).

Year 2 Results/Findings: Many of the teachers involved with STRIDE adults had experience working with both adult students and learning disabled secondary students at the Altoona AVTS. The results of teacher closeout interviews, and informal feedback acquired during the Year 2 in-service, indicated that teachers were able to combine these skills and work with STRIDE adults with little difficulty. In addition, all teachers at Altoona AVTS participated in a variety of staff development activities throughout the year. For these reasons, no additional staff development activities specifically related to STRIDE (beside those already mentioned) were provided.

Recommendations: In other settings, where vocational instructors may not have experience working with learning disabled or adult students, more staff development in these areas may be necessary.

Products: DNA

12. To find a full time on-the-job training (co-op) placement for each participant, supervised by a coordinator familiar with individual learning strengths and weaknesses.

Year 1 Activities: Only one Year 1 client was placed on co-op. The student's placement was in a construction job. It was a full-time placement that later turned into full-time employment for the student. The other students opted

to complete the 180 days of classroom instruction, on the advice of the onsite coordinator and placement coordinator.

Year 1 Results/Findings: Due to the training schedule (one year of intensive training) and the nature of the clients' learning handicaps (students needed to complete the entire training program) most of the adults in the project during Year 1 opted to complete training rather than go out on co-op.

Year 2 Activities: The on-site coordinator worked with two of the co-op counselors to obtain work sites for the students. During Year 2, two students completed co-op placements, while two were placed on co-op but did not complete it. One of these students had spent two years in cosmetology, and was placed in a beauty shop on part-time co-op. She was dismissed due to inability to get along with her employer and customers. She has since obtained full-time employment. The other student (trained in marketing /distributive education) was placed in a part-time co-op position, but was dismissed due to attendance problems. Project staff have since lost contact with this student. The third student (food service) was placed full-time at an amusement park, managing the concession stands. His position will extend throughout the summer. The fourth student (warehouse services) was placed with a company on full-time co-op. He successfully completed his co-op placement, and it turned into a full-time, permanent position for him in June, 1990.

Year 2 Results/Findings: Once again, it was determined that most students should remain in classes and complete their training rather than taking a co-op placement. Of the four students placed in co-op, half did not successfully complete it, due to difficulties in relating to the demands of the workplace.
Products: DNA

13. To find a full time job placement for at least 80-85% of participants within three months of completion of the training program.

Year 1 and 2 Activities: The onsite coordinator and the placement counselor at Altoona AVTS worked together to find full-time employment for Year 1 and 2 clients.

Year 1 Results: Of the 14 students who completed training during Year 1, six were placed in full-time employment within three months after the end of the training period. This is a 43% placement rate. Two students were placed in part-time positions. Four returned to Project STRIDE during Year 2 for further training. Two students were never placed.

Year 2 Results: Of the 21 students who completed training during Year 2, 11 were placed in full-time employment at the close of the project; one was placed in part-time employment; and eight had not yet been placed at the close of the project. One student is returning to Altoona AVTS next year for further vocational training. This is a 52% placement rate. Of the four students who returned from Year 1 for further training, two have been placed in full-time employment; two have not yet been placed. This brings the placement rate for students completing training during Year 1 to 57%.

Findings: High local employment rates make placement of STRIDE students difficult.

Products: DNA

14. To provide consultation and assistance to both the learning disabled young adults and their employers during an initial one-year period.

Year 2 Activities: All students completing training during Year 1 have been followed up on a regular basis. Assistance has been provided to students and employers as needed. This has been accomplished in the following ways:

1. Employed students were evaluated monthly by their immediate supervisor. An evaluation form was developed that covers job skills, transferable skills, and self-management skills, and distributed to employers. Employers rated students skills on a scale of 1 (not often enough) to 3 (always) and gave them overall ratings on skill and knowledge of subject that could range from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 3 (excellent). The forms were mailed to employers monthly with a cover letter, explaining the purpose of the forms and requesting return of the completed forms. When the forms were returned, the coordinator made contact with the student or employer if there were any unsatisfactory scores. This enabled staff to work with the student and the employer to prevent or solve major problems. This procedure proved particularly valuable for one student. The student was receiving unsatisfactory scores and returned to the Altoona AVTS for counseling by the onsite coordinator. He was able to change his behavior, and the next months scores reflected the change in behavior. This student is still working at the job.
2. Personal contact was made by the onsite coordinator and the Altoona AVTS placement counselor periodically with those students not working or still looking for permanent employment in their field of training.
3. Two support group meetings were scheduled with students from Year 1, in December, 1989 and March, 1990. Ten students attended the first meeting,

while five attended the second. Students who attended the meetings found them to be helpful. These meetings gave the coordinator insights about clients needs and concerns: for example, what types of employment they were looking for, and what types of personal and job problems they were having.

Findings:

1. The most critical period for follow up is in the months immediately following job placement. Due to summer leave of placement staff and serious illness of the coordinator, there was a 1 and 1/2 month gap between placement and follow-up during summer of 1989. This most likely hindered the adjustment of work to two students who later left their jobs, because project staff were not alerted to problems at that time.
2. Contact with the employer during the early months was crucial in assisting students with adjustment to work.
3. Support groups proved helpful for Year 1 students.

Products: STRIDE Supervisor's Evaluation of Employee Form

15. To determine through follow-up procedures that at least 90% of those individuals placed in jobs have made a satisfactory job adjustment as indicated by remaining on one job for a period of at least 6 months.

Results: Of the eight Year 1 students who were placed in full- or part-time employment, two remained in their first job placement for over a period of six months. Two other students were laid off of their first job placement (dismissal

from the job was not their fault) but remained employed in a second job for a period of at least six months. This is a 50% adjustment rate. Four students did not remain on jobs for a period of six months. Two younger clients quit to seek better jobs. The third was undecided about her desire to remain in her field of training. The fourth student was EMR. Although project staff requested that she be given special supervision and gradual training by assistance from a job coach, no adaptations were made by the employer. She was fired when the employer claimed she could not handle job tasks.

Findings:

Three of the four students who kept jobs were older students (28 years or older). The younger students appeared to have more trouble keeping jobs. Three out of the four were dissatisfied with the match of their jobs to personal goals.

Products: DNA

16. To identify changes made in self-concept related to participation in the program and successful job placement.

Year 1 and 2 Activities: The Adjective Check List (Gough, 1984) was administered during the pre-enrollment assessment and again at the completion of the training phase as a measure of self-concept. The administration procedure was modified to minimize the impact of reading disabilities on selection of self-descriptive adjectives. A tape recording was made so that participants could listen as each adjective was read. Participants were also provided with a retyped version of the response form which was less

crowded visually than the standard response form. They were asked to circle each word accurately describing themselves, and to place a mark next to any word for which they were uncertain of the meaning.

Year 1 Results: As a group, the 17 who completed the Adjective Check List at the beginning of the project scored within the average range with mean scale scores of 49 (with 50 as mean scale score) for the total number of adjectives checked, favorable, and unfavorable adjectives. The group in fact scored within the average range on all 24 scales of the instrument. Only four students obtained individual subscale scores below the average range. Posttest scores were available for three of these four students. One student, who had scored below the average range on two subscales on the pretest, scored in the average range on these subscales on the posttest. The second student, who had scored below the average range on thirteen subscales on the pretest, scored in the average range on all of these subscales on the posttest. Only one student did not make an overall gain in scores from pretest to posttest. This student scored below average on seven subscales on the pretest. On the posttest, she scored in the average range on three of these subscales, while her scores on four subscales did not change. Her score on three other subscales, on which she had scored in the average range on the pretest, dropped below the average range on the posttest.

Year 2 Results: As a group, the twenty students who completed the Adjective Check List during the pretraining assessment scored within the average range, with mean scale scores of 52, 45, and 52 on total number of adjectives checked, favorable and unfavorable adjectives, respectively. As in Year 1, four students (who began the project and remained enrolled throughout the year), obtained

individual subscale scores below the average range. Four additional students, who did not participate in the project, also obtained individual subscale scores below the average range. Posttest scores were available for the four students who completed the project. Two of these students scored below the average range in one subscale on the pretest: they scored in the average range on these scales on the posttest. The third student scored below average on two pretest subscales; his scores on these two subscales were in the average range on the posttest. The fourth student scored below average on one subscale on the pretest. Her score on this subscale remained the same on the posttest: in addition, her score on a second subscale dropped below average on the posttest.

Findings: Self-concept, as measured by the Adjective Check List, is in the normal range for the students who participated in the project. Of the eight students who scored below average on any subscale on the pretest, five showed movement into the average range when retested at the end of the training phase. Two students showed no improvement, while posttest scores were not available for one student. The self-concept of five of these students improved over the course of the project.

Products: DNA

Objectives Added for Second Year

17. To extend services to adults with other mild learning handicaps, including mentally retarded adults and adults with mild emotional disturbances.

Year 1 Activities: Due to the fact that employment in the Altoona area was high, and time allotted for recruitment and planning before Year 1 was brief, three mildly retarded adults were enrolled in STRIDE during Year 1. Because they received training so enthusiastically, and there was a need for this type of service, the decision was made to extend services to adult with other mild learning handicaps.

Year 2 Activities: During Year 2, three EMR and two SED students were enrolled in the program. The two SED students left the program early in the year to seek employment. The three EMR students completed the training program and were placed in jobs.

Results: The two SED students enrolled did not complete the training phase of the program. Six EMR students were enrolled over the two years, and all completed the training program. Of these six, one did not want employment, and one could not work because of physical disabilities. The other four were placed on jobs. One of the four (a student who completed training during Year 1) did not remain employed. The other three students adjusted easily to employment and are still on jobs.

Findings:

1. SED clients may require greater assistance than provided.
2. The STRIDE training program could be completed by EMR students.
3. For at least half of the EMR students, adjustment to employment provided no difficulty.

Products: DNA

18. To explore the effects of instruction in intergenerational settings on adult and secondary students.

Year 2 Activities: Project staff and teachers observed during Year 1 that many of the STRIDE students appeared to serve as role models for the secondary students in their vocational classes. During Year 2, an attempt to measure patterns of interaction among secondary students, adult students, and STRIDE adults was undertaken. A sociometric scale was devised, consisting of four questions: 1) If you had to do a class project, who in class would you want to work with?; 2) You are working on an assignment in class and you have a question. The teacher is busy helping another student. Who in class would you go to for help?; 3) If you were having a personal problem, who in class would you go to for help?; and 4) If you were here all day for school, who would you choose to have lunch with? The questionnaire was administered to nine classes which included secondary students, adult students and STRIDE adults, during the spring of Year 2. Students were asked to list three responses to each question (first, second, and third choice). Responses were restricted to

other students in the class. Responses that named a teacher or counselor, a student in another class, or an unknown individual were not counted.

Scoring of responses on these questions yielded the total number of times that secondary, adult and STRIDE students named students in each category in response to each question. Comparing the results for the four questions showed little difference among questions in the distribution of responses. The table below therefore summarizes the results for the four questions, indicating the percentage of responses that fell into each category.

Year 2 Results:

	Response		
	secondary	adult	STRIDE
secondary	82.3%	12.1%	5.6%
adult	11.3%	76.6%	12.1%
STRIDE	41.4%	45.4%	13.2%

Year 2 Findings: The table shows that secondary and adult students almost always chose members of their own groups in response to these questions. Although it appears that secondary and adult students rarely chose STRIDE students, it should be noted that only 9.8% of the total number of students were STRIDE students. The low percentage of STRIDE students named in response to these questions would thus be expected if secondary and adult students selected other students without regard to which category those others are in, and does not indicate any tendency to avoid interaction with STRIDE students. On the other hand, the low percentage of secondary students named by adult students is at odds with the large percentage of secondary students in the

sample (74.9%), and may indicate a tendency for adult students to avoid interaction with younger, secondary students.

The pattern of responses made by STRIDE students is different from the patterns of secondary and adult students. STRIDE students are much more likely to name others outside their own group, and named secondary and adult students about equally often. This result suggests that STRIDE students feel comfortable in interaction with students of different generations. STRIDE students named other STRIDE students relatively infrequently; again, this result is to be expected due to the relatively low percentage of STRIDE students in the total sample.

Dissemination Activities, Year 1: An acronym for the project was developed: STRIDE (Services for Transition to Independence Through Education). This acronym was used on dissemination materials developed during year one: two brochures, one for recruiting potential clients and the other for business and the community. A glossy folder to hold materials for dissemination was also developed. A dissemination lunch was held on April 6, 1989 at Altoona AVTS for interested members of the vocational education, adult education, and special education communities. Mrs. Ellen Casey, First Lady of Pennsylvania, was the guest of honor. Dr. Joyce McWilliams, from the Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute at the University of Illinois, and Dr. Donna Wall, Commissioner, Basic Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education, discussed national and state perspectives on the project, respectively.

Dissemination Activities, Year 2

Presentation at National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs, August, 1989

Presentation at American Association for Adult Continuing Education, October, 1989

Presentation at Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education, February, 1990

Presentation at National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs, August, 1990

Presentation at Vocational Administrators of Pennsylvania, 1990

Presentation at Pennsylvania Vocational Education Conference, 1989

Model-Building Accomplishments

Completed Model

The model developed as part of the STRIDE project provides an individually responsive vocational training program designed to enhance the employability of learning disabled and other mildly handicapped adults. Appendix D gives a schematic overview of the key components of the program. Phase one consists of vocational assessment to determine the vocational interests and aptitudes of prospective students. This phase culminates in a counseling session through which the potential student identifies the best available vocational training program to match his or her interests and abilities. In a program utilizing only one training site such as ours, this may lead to referral to another program or location. For those individuals electing to

continue on in the program the core of the ITP (See Appendix E)is developed at this time.

During phase two the students spend an extended period of time in full-time training, usually approximately one academic year. During this time the student attends classes in the selected vocational area, including "theory" classes and "hands-on" laboratory periods. In addition, as detailed in each student's ITP, individual and group sessions are made available both on a scheduled and ad hoc basis in the following areas: basic reading or math skills; job specific reading or math skills; general study skills; life-coping skills; job seeking, job interviewing, and job keeping skills; and interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Because of the diversity of students' learning abilities and disabilities, a standardized program is not recommened. Almost all students, however, will likely benefit from spending at least a portion of their time in group sessions on job getting and keeping. Older adults (over 25) with more extensive job experience may not need to spend as much time in such sessions, but the irregular work patterns found among many mildly handicapped adults suggests that even older students be included in a reasonable number of such sessions depending on work history and performance in shop classrooms and co-op. Tremendous variability in basic skill levels, with clients varying from second to twelfth grade level on grade-level norms in reading and mathmatics subtests of the Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery, suggests flexible responses to basic skills assistance. Some students are likely to need intensive individual assistance with basic skills and direct subject matter tutoring, while others require little or no assistance. It became evident as well in this project that a number of students required some counseling in study strategies even when their basic

skills appeared to be moderately strong, suggesting study skills instruction is a vital component of such a project.

The final phase of the model is placement in a full-time paid position, presumably in the area for which the student has trained. For at least the first six months close contact is maintained between the employer and the project coordinator to monitor the client's progress on the job. A system utilizing regularly scheduled written feedback (See Appendix F) is important, with telephone communications and on-site visits to the employment site supplementing the written feedback as needed. Thus, any problems which may arise are identified fairly immediately. Communication is also maintained between the client and the project coordinator so that the former student knows he or she has a source of support beyond the workplace. A third component of the follow-up phase is the scheduling of periodic group meetings for the clients at this stage of the program. Here they can discuss both the joys and tribulations of their new jobs and problem solve situations which have challenged them on the job.

Novel or Specially Crafted Components

Several features of this model are distinctive. First, the delivery of an integrated, individualized three-phase program tailors components of the training program to client needs from pre-evaluation through placement. Second, the model provides for the delivery of instruction to learning disabled adults in a setting geared to the needs many of them share for applied learning with direct hands-on experience. Although some mildly handicapped students will have taken advantagage of opportunities for vocational education while in secondary school, many will have followed a general course of studies. For those lacking the interest, overall ability and/or persistence required to complete

a two-year or four-year college program, vocational training provides an opportunity to gain additional skills for employment within one year of full-time study. Space is available in many vocational-technical schools, and increasingly, adult students have become a part of this context. Thus, providing a specialized program within the context of mainstream, intergenerational vocational curriculum represents a relatively new option for further education for the mildly handicapped adult. Through this program, age-integrated classes were found to be a viable context for learning for STRIDE clients, in some cases offering unique opportunities for younger LD adults to emerge as mature among their peers.

A structured system of job follow-up was another distinctive contribution of this model. By maintaining communication concurrently with both former student and employer, the project coordinator was able to remain abreast of progress and problems on the job. Additional features might be added to such a follow-up system, such as regular site visits by the project coordinator and even job coaching. The initial employment phase seems to be a critical period especially for younger adults lacking significant prior work experience. Individuals who have succeeded in the school environment of the training program may still encounter substantial employment problems, some of which are due to circumstances beyond their control. Given an additional year of funding, this would have been the phase of the program receiving greatest attention from the project management team.

Grounds for Model To Be Replicated Elsewhere

Much of the model developed here could be replicated in similar settings. The program made extensive use of previously existing resources. Critical to replication would be:

1. Vocational-technical setting with adults in attendance. Training programs offered on full-year basis.
2. Staff experienced with secondary special needs students.
3. Supportive administration.
4. Agreements with local agencies including OVR and adult education programs.
5. Program coordinator assigned to project at least half time (with adequate support from other staff), preferably full time.

Replication

Efforts to replicate the project were not a part of the original project proposal. As of the closing date of the project the management team is unaware of programs which replicate this model. A dissemination manual produced along with this report should facilitate replication in the future.

Costs of Starting and Operating the Model in Another Setting

Developing a model with low "new cost" was a priority. The project STRIDE model calls for using existing classroom space for a new clientele; namely adults with mild handicaps. It also makes use of existing AVTS resources, such as an assessment center, remedial instructional labs, school counselor. Thus the net new additional per-pupil cost for the STRIDE model can be as low as the additional instructional supply costs. These costs are well within Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) guidelines and most STRIDE clients were OVR eligible. It should be emphasized however that it is important that someone in the school be responsible for monitoring and supporting project clients. This entails either hiring an additional employee on a part-time basis or providing equivalent release time to an appropriate staff member.

Continuation Beyond OSERS Funding

During the two years this pilot program was in operation, the administration of the Altoona AVTS was cognizant of the fact that once funding was terminated, alternate means would have to be found if the program were to continue. Because of similar services already provided to the secondary handicapped population, it was decided that the adults indentified as Learning Disabled or with other mild handicaps could be integrated, not only in the classroom, but also in ancillary services.

Although not labeled as a "special program" such as STRIDE, clients referred to the Altoona AVTS Adult Education Programs through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or the Intermediate Unit #8, will be placed in full-time programs and given additional assistance. Services will include: assessment and remediation, counseling, co-op and job placement. The missing ingredient will be the one-on-one services of a program coordinator such as was provided in the STRIDE program. This is due to the lack of funds to support a coordinator at this time. Clients would be charged the existing tuition, however, funding assistance would be limited to those eligible under OVR, JTPA, Single Parent/Displace Homemaker Program or the Carl Perkins Act. With the expected receipt of Middle States Accreditation by January, 1991, clients would then be eligible for student loans.

Because of the research information and materials developed during this pilot program, the process of mainstreaming LD adults should not be difficult. Instructors have now received training and have experience in handling this new clientele. Also, with the cooperation of area agencies involved in serving the handicapped population, initial assessment and screening could be accomplished before enrollment at the Altoona AVTS.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions can be made regarding the various phases of the program.

Recruitment

1. Some prospective clients had with difficulty committing to a full-time program; part-time options needed for mature adults. Many older LD adults have been employed and are now displaced by changing workplace demands on skills. As in the general population, some LD women have been homemakers and lack job experience comparable to men in their age group.
2. A newspaper article was most the effective recruitment device, although multiple sources were necessary to recruit the targeted number of students.

Assessment

3. A significant number of potential clients over 30 years of age have not been previously diagnosed and may require formal and extensive evaluation.
4. While many have an idea of their interests at the time of inquiry and others can suitably matched following a work-station aptitude assessment such as the Singer, a sufficient period of exploration is needed to insure they will train in areas where they are likely to be satisfied with employment. A more substantial exploratory period was not funded in this case and would have required extra financial resources because of the need to bring teachers in during the vacation period.
5. Self-concept for many of the clients attracted to such a program appears to be within an average range; measurable gains were found for some with low self-concept.

6. Interpersonal skills need to be addressed as an area of concern among job-specific basic skills; deficits in this area were greater than in Communication Skills for one cohort.

Training

7. A wide variety of training programs need to be available to trainees. The originally planned six adult programs proved insufficient in range, with clients electing 15 intergenerational programs.

8. Training can be successfully offered in a mainstream intergenerational environment where the learning disabled are not the only adult students. In such a setting, even young adults with learning disabilities can have the opportunity to act as role models for younger students.

9. An individualized support program is necessary to meet the wide-ranging ability levels likely to be found in such a program. Students in this program ranged in achievement levels from the first grade level to the twelfth grade level in reading and from the second grade level to the twelfth grade level in math (Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery). Likewise a variety of materials are needed to meet specialized student needs.

10. Adequate resources need to be allocated for individual support including content area tutoring in some cases; some problems, however, can be addressed through group training sessions, including sessions on topics such as study skills, goal-setting, self-esteem, interpersonal skills, etc.

11. Staff development needs were minimal in this project because of the unique experience of the teaching staff. This may not be true in other cases.

Jobs

12. Decisions regarding termination of classroom training to begin a co-op placement were complex and more often led to a decision to bypass co-op to provide additional time in the classroom. A one-year program may not be sufficient in most cases to encompass both training and co-op. An alternative model might involve one full-year of training, followed by a paid co-op or internship of three to six-months. With appropriate matches these placements might flow into full-time permanent jobs. The disadvantage of such an option would be even further delay of full-time employment.

13. Younger and older adults may need two different models or options . Older adults may be most anxious to begin full-time employment and may have sufficient prior work experience to bypass the co-op period. Younger adults may be in greatest need of a structured co-op experience and may be more able to delay full-time permanent employment for a period of time needed to gain that highly structured experience. Since age may not be the only criterion, having two such models available would provide greater options for all age groups

14. Structured job follow-up is essential during the first few months of employment. A variety of circumstances may interfere with job continuation during these months, some of which are not directly related to the employee's performance. Intensive follow-up can help the client anticipate and respond to a wide range of such circumstances.

15. EMR students may provide some special challenges to placement, and along with some LD students may require job coaching during the initial period of placement. Such arrangements should be available. At the same time, job placement and performance is not necessarily affected by EMR status as indicated by the success of several EMR clients.

16. Particularly for younger students, on-site job visits might be considered as a useful element to add to the job follow-up stage. Had a third year of funding been available, this would have been the most noteable addition to the project implementation.

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APPENDIX A

TIMELINE

Project STRIDE Timeline

Phase I: Pre-Training

- Recruitment
- Selection and Development of Assessment Tools
- Client Assessment/ Counseling
- Selection and Development of Materials
- Individual Transitional Plan

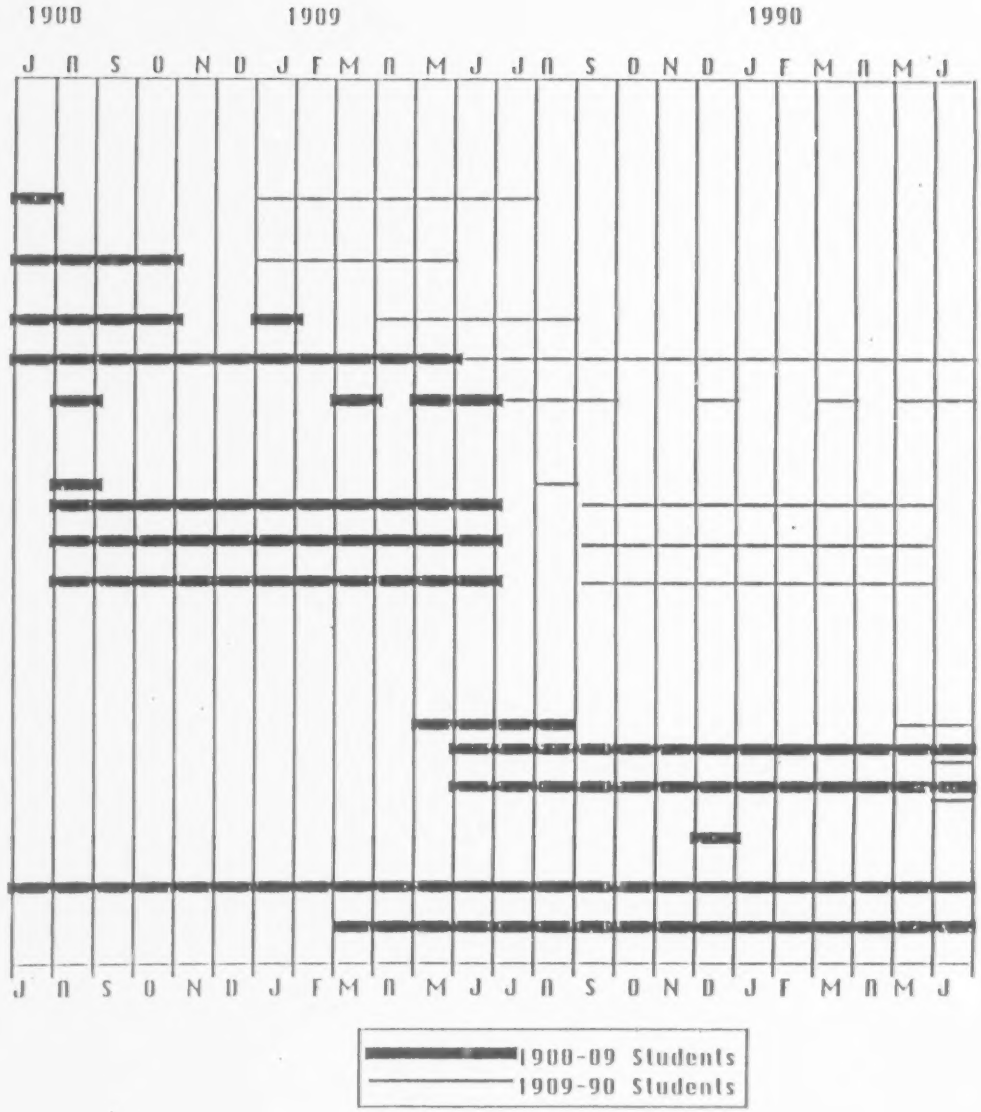
Phase II: Training

- Pre-Vocational
- Life Coping Skills
- Job Specific Basic Skills
- Job Specific Training Program

Phase III: Job Placement/ Follow-up

- On the Job Training (Co-op)
- Job Placement
- Follow-up & Support Services
- Readminister Adjective Check List

- Research/Evaluation
- Dissemination



APPENDIX B

BROCHURES

stride

For more information on what Project **STRIDE** offers to students, employers, and society contact:

Project STRIDE-Adult Education Office
Patricia Frazier, Coordinator
Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School
1500 4th Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602-3695
(814) 946-8469

SERVICES for TRANSITION

to INDEPENDENCE

through EDUCATION

Project *STRIDE* is administered jointly by The Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, Penn State University, and the Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School. It is supported in part with funds from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, United States Department of Education.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Altoona Area Vocational Technical School affirms that all curriculum offerings and student enrollment practices will be handled without discrimination based on sex, color, religion, national origin, or non-job related handicaps or disabilities.

ALTOONA AREA
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL
1500 4th Avenue
Altoona PA 16602-3695

ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

STRIDE is a program designed to assist adults with learning disabilities to achieve independence through education and training. It offers transitional services to help individuals become employed.

STRIDE is a program of assessment, training, counseling, support services, adapted instruction, and placement services.

STRIDE offers.....

ASSESSMENT

- aptitude evaluation
- interest inventories
- academic achievement
- psychological evaluation
- interpersonal skills
- job-related skills

TRAINING

- competency-based vocational-technical instruction
- adapted materials
- tutoring

TRAINING SUPPORT

- supplemental theory
- test preparation
- taping services
- test taking
- job-specific academics
- academic remediation
- study skills

LIFE SKILLS INSTRUCTION

- daily living skills
- self-esteem
- goal setting
- realistic expectations
- stress management
- decision making
- interpersonal skills

PLACEMENT SERVICES

- job search skills
- employer expectations
- on-the-job communication
- job-keeping skills
- linkage with employers

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To develop and strengthen linkages with agencies serving the learning disabled adult.

- To provide assessment to each individual to identify interests, abilities, and need for support services.

- To develop for each student an Individualized Transition Plan that identifies needed services to ensure a smooth transition to employment.

- To provide vocational-technical training in an intergenerational setting.

- To provide placement services to students that include job-search skills and linkages with employers.

- To provide follow-up services to the student and employer, for one year, to assist in student transition to employment.

- To provide a demonstration model for training adult learners with learning disabilities in an intergenerational setting.

PUT STAMP HERE

stride

Project **STRIDE**-Adult Education Office
Patricia Frazier, Coordinator
Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School
1500 4th Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602-3695
(814) 946-8469

SERVICES for TRANSITION
to INDEPENDENCE
through EDUCATION

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School affirms that all curriculum offerings and student enrollment practices will be handled without discrimination based on sex, color, religion, national origin or non-job related handicaps or disabilities.

ALTOONA AREA
VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL
1500 4th Avenue
Altoona PA 16602-3695

ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

DO YOU HAVE.....

- handicap or learning disability that keeps you from training for, getting, or keeping the job you want?

ARE YOU.....?

- lacking self confidence
- lacking training
- trying to find training
- lacking job-seeking skills
- looking for career guidance

unemployed because of your handicap

DO YOU WANT TO.....?

- gain vocational training
- build confidence
- learn job-seeking skills
- find a job that is right for you
- become independent

Project **STRIDE** may be your answer!!!

Project **STRIDE** is a program for adults with mild disabilities.

Project **STRIDE** aids transition to employment through:

ASSESSMENT

- Interest Inventory
- Hands-on work evaluations
- Academic evaluations
- Career education

TRAINING

- Placement in vocational training
- Support services
- Supplemental instruction
- Life-skills instruction
- Job-search instruction

PLACEMENT

- Placement services
- Help in preparing for the interview
- Help with writing a resume
- Support during your job search
- Follow-up for one year

WOULD YOU LIKE.....

_____more information?

_____an appointment?

_____to sign up for **STRIDE**?

If so.....

Check one or more of the above

PLEASE FILL OUT...

_____
Your Name

_____
Your Address

_____
City State Zip

_____
Phone Number

Cut this page off and mail it to us. Our address is on the other side. Please put on a stamp.

APPENDIX C

NEWS RELEASES

Altoona Mirror 7/27/88

Job training

Classes offered for learning-disabled adults

By Kay Stephens
Staff Writer

The Altoona Area Vo-Tech School has teamed up with Penn State University to provide a job training program for adults with learning disabilities.

Pat Frazier, the on-site coordinator, is hoping to attract 25 to 30 students to the new program that will offer job training, experience and placement assistance.

She is interviewing prospective students now for the "Comprehensive Transitional Employment and Training Services for Young Adults with Learning Disabilities" program which will begin offering classes in late August or mid-September. Those interested may contact her at the vo-tech school between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. by calling 946-8469.

Some adults have never been identified as having a learning disability because when they were in school, there were no services for those students, said Pat Frazier, project coordinator who is working out of the Altoona Area Vo-Tech School's adult education office.

Some people are unaware of their learning disabilities, and they tend to be "in and out of many jobs, never understanding why," Ms. Frazier explained. Many of them are glad to find out there's a reason why they fail to accomplish some tasks, "and that it's not just them," she added.

Administrators of the new program are also interested in attracting adults already aware they have a learning disability.

The program, which is tuition-free, offers those adults a chance to learn a trade while attending classes at the vo-tech school, Ms. Frazier said. The students will have close supervision and assistance, she said. After about eight to nine months of classroom work, the adults will be assigned to work for area employers. Program staffers will provide assistance while they're working, and they will also assist the adults in applying for jobs.

Penn State, which received the grant for this program from the Office of Education for Postsecondary Education for Handicapped Persons, is responsible for developing the curriculum for this program. But all classes will be held at the vo-tech school, with students enrolling during the day.

All costs associated with the program will be covered by the grant. In addition to tuition, the grant may offer funding to cover the cost of child care services and transportation, Ms. Frazier said.

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ALTOONA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
FIFTH AVENUE AND FIFTEENTH STREET
ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA 16602

FREDERICK L. SMEIGH
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

DENNIS E. MURRAY
SUPERINTENDENT

GEORGE J. CARDONE
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

NEWS RELEASE

DATE: MARCH 31, 1989

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

For more information contact:

THOMAS M. BRADLEY
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
(814) 946-8424

ELLEN CASEY TO VISIT ALTOONA AREA

Mrs. Ellen Casey, the wife of Governor Robert P. Casey, will participate in a special workshop with people from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Penn State and numerous state and private agencies at the Altoona Area Voc-Tech School on Thursday, April 6.

The workshop will deal with Project STRIDE, a program which provides comprehensive transitional employment and training services for adults with mild handicaps so that they might become employable, productive members of society,

The project is also designed to develop a workable model that could be used by other voc-tech schools and to serve a segment of the population that needs this assistance.

Project STRIDE is a demonstration/research project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. It is being administered jointly by Penn State's Institute for Adult Literacy and the Altoona Area Voc-Tech School.

MORE

A unique feature of this project is that these adults have been placed in "intergenerational" classes at the Altoona Voc-Tech and have been integrated with secondary students and other adult students. Currently 18 adults are enrolled in the program.

This aspect of the project will be highlighted through a panel discussion during the workshop which will be held in room C-232 of the school from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (schedule enclosed)

Patricia Frazier is the local project coordinator. Local adults who are interested in learning more about Project STRIDE can call Ms. Frazier at 946-8469.

Following a luncheon in the school's Educators' Inn, Mrs. Casey will visit the Altoona Area Public Library where she will read stories to children.

She also plans to visit the Altoona Area School District's Community Education Center located in the Stevens Building on East Crawford Ave. and Lloyd St. There she will learn more about the adult literacy program that is in place.

-30-

NOTE: Enclosed you will find Mrs. Casey's schedule for the day and some additional information about PROJECT STRIDE.

I will be in attendance to assist with media coverage throughout the day. You can also obtain information from Patricia Frazier, project coordinator, by calling 946-8469.

News

PENNSTATE

Department of
Public Information

Telephone: 814-865-7517

312 Old Main
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Pennsylvania 16802

4-3-89

PENN STATE JOINT PARTNER IN PROJECT FOR HANDICAPPED

University Park, Pa. -- Mildly handicapped people are getting a chance to investigate a variety of occupational areas as a result of a joint project administered by Penn State and the Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School.

Project STRIDE, which started last July, is designed to provide job skills training to mildly handicapped adults as a means of making them more employable members of society. The project will also serve as model for other area vocational technical schools in the state with excess capacity.

Fifty state leaders will learn more about the Project STRIDE on April 6 at a conference at the Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School, 1500 4th Ave. Ellen Casey, first lady of Pennsylvania, will be the guest of honor at the event, which starts at 10 a.m. and closes with a luncheon at 12:30 p.m. in the school-run Educator's Inn.

The program is an innovative effort to serve an underrepresented group of people in the state by using vocational-technical schools, says project director Kenneth Gray.

"The project addresses perhaps the number one labor force issue in Pennsylvania, which is how to utilize underrepresented groups to avert a severe labor shortage," says Gray, also an associate professor of vocational education at Penn State.

The 21 students range in age from their late teens to their 40s, he notes, and are learning disabled or physically or emotionally impaired.

-- more --

After an assessment of their abilities and goals, the students choose courses in food service, computer programming, general health occupations, carpentry or graphic arts.

Life-coping skills training, on-the-job training, and staff support and peer counseling are also included in the program, Gray says. So far, the response of local industry in the Altoona area to Project STRIDE has been tremendous, he adds.

"There's a labor shortage in Pennsylvania, and I think everyone in the state realizes that previously underrepresented groups deserve a chance," Gray says. "The students are doing wonderfully, too, with very high grade averages."

Only one new full-time staff member was hired to coordinate the program. The existing teaching staff at the vocational-technical school does most of the work, Gray says.

The program is being funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

"This project is training people for career work, whether they are high school graduates who missed this training or people in their 40s who lost their high-paid, low-skill jobs," Gray says.

mq

Making STRIDEs in education

By Patt Frank
Staff Writer

No taunting. No teasing. No ridiculing. Just teachers willing to explain, explain and explain a theory with the utmost patience. Other students extend a helping hand.

For Rick Bollinger and 35 other adults with learning disabilities, these positive attitudes have enabled them to become productive members of society. Services for Transition to Independence through Education (STRIDE) has enabled dyslexics like Bollinger, 41, and Deborah Lawrence, 29, of Altoona and Heather Michaels, 20, of Tyrone to learn marketable skills suited to their strengths.

The 36 participants, who range in age from 18 to 45, also learned job search skills like writing a resume and interviewing. The adult students were integrated into existing Altoona Area Vo-Tech programs.

Students who completed the initial year of schooling received follow-up assistance on the job, for the second year of the program. Second-year students and those enrolled this year will continue to receive assistance after the funding expires in June through other existing services.

The program was funded through a federal grant received by Penn State University from the Office of Education for Post-Secondary Education for Handicapped persons. It provided Penn State researchers with an opportunity to study older, learning disabled students.

Program participants experience a variety of learning disabilities, Patricia Frazier, on-site coordinator, said.

People with a learning disability often have average or above average intelligence, but process information and learn differently from other people. It is commonly described as a miswiring within the brain.

The most common type of learning disability is dyslexia, an inability to read written material. Letters are often transposed or flipped. A "b" appears as a "d" and "was" becomes "saw."

Mirror photo by J.D. Cavich

RICK BOLLINGER works on a circuit board as part of electrical training received through a program aimed at adults with learning disabilities. Through STRIDE, the 41-year-old Altoonan has gained a new sense of self-esteem and self-confidence through finding ways of coping with dyslexia.

Another form of learning disability seen in students within the program is a problem interpreting facial expressions or missing inflection cues in speech. Both disabilities can create socialization problems. Spoken words are taken out of context or the punch line of a joke is missed, Ms. Frazier explained. Other LDs have memory problems.

LDs are able to learn, but learning techniques need to be adapted. Such adaptions can also be used in career planning. If a person has a hearing problem, for example, he would not make a good receptionist.

For one student, concentrating on strengths meant specializing in one aspect of welding. The student was unable to make long, straight vertical welds because of a lack in eye-hand coordination. His instruction centered on making short welds, and job placement counselors found a position that required that skill.

"For some of them, it has changed their lives. For others it is a step along the way. The ones having the most success are the older ones who are ready to settle down," Ms. Frazier said. "All felt it was a positive factor. It gave them a chance to achieve something."

Bollinger, 41, experienced a sense of isolation while a student in the 1950s when learning disabilities went undiagnosed and he was labeled lazy or stupid by teachers and harassed by students.

Today things are different.

"I was shocked. Not one of them has ever made fun of me. They'll come and help me," he said.

In the 1950s, teachers passed him from grade to grade with the hope that the next teacher would help him to read and write. No one ever did.

Instead, he developed his own coping skills like memorizing street sign shapes to obtain his driver's license and asking co-workers to read the boss's handwriting.

While in STRIDE, he's discovered a teacher, Charles Worrell, who is willing to explain a concept as many times as necessary and adapt his teaching methods to help Bollinger.

Worrell is Bollinger's industrial electricity teacher.

"This particular year, the repetition has helped him. He can go and do a job on his own that he couldn't do before," Worrell said. "He's come along real well through the program. It's given him confidence. He sees his problem and has done things on his own to make it easier."

One of those things is color coding electrical circuit pathways. Another is enlarging small diagrams so the pathways are larger and more easily seen, instead of a jumble of criss crossing lines. Bollinger also has obtained a tutor and has started taping theory lessons so he can review them repeatedly.

Worrell credits Bollinger with inspiring two other students to admit they were having similar problems. Because they stepped forward, they've been given special help, too.

Another benefit to having Bollinger and four other adults in his class of 45 students, Worrell said, is that he draws upon their experience in the workforce to illustrate classroom theories.

Bollinger was previously interviewed by the Mirror in 1981, but declined to have his identity revealed. Today he wants other LDs and the public in general to know the hurdles exist, but can be overcome.

"It's not that we can't learn, it just takes us longer. I've learned that people need to know that we're not dumb or stupid," Bollinger said.

Area employers also need to learn more about people who have learning disabilities like dyslexia, fellow STRIDE graduate Mrs. Lawrence said.

Mrs. Lawrence dropped out of school in the 11th grade, later attained a GED and attended Mount Aloysius Junior College until she again couldn't cope.

After seeking help at the Encouragement Place, she was diagnosed as dyslexic and was referred to the STRIDE program, where she took graphic design. While enrolled, she learned she can be a productive person, but one who works best in an apprenticeship.

Before being laid off from the Albert Michaels Gallery, she worked on a mural downtown and in the Capitol building in Harrisburg as an apprentice.

Using her newfound employment search skills, Mrs. Lawrence then found employment at Carol Cable doing assembly line work. She said she has encountered problems filling out time cards or learning of better jobs to bid on.

"In the workforce, most people are ignorant of what (learning disabilities) are and they don't want to take time to help you. It's either you can do the job or you can't."

Mrs. Lawrence hopes to further her education and do more work in the restoration field.

Fellow student Ms. Michaels also hopes to further her education. Completing a program in interior design through STRIDE has given Ms. Michaels the courage to further her education in child development at the Altoona Campus.

Also dyslexic, she has been unable to find a job in interior design locally, she said, because she has no experience. For now, she is employed at Jean Nicole in the Logan Valley Mall.

She remembers one painful incident while in junior high when a friend borrowed her paper and commented on the misspellings. Another friend, not knowing Ms. Michaels could overhear, advised her to never copy from Ms. Michaels because it was always wrong.

The sting of the incident lingers, but by participating in the STRIDE program, Ms. Michaels said she has come to feel less isolated because she is not alone in her problem. The self confidence she has gained through STRIDE is salve to those old wounds and provides hope for the future.

Warning signs for LDs

Help is now available for children with learning disabilities, but the signs of learning disabilities must first be recognized. Early intervention can minimize or completely correct many disabilities.

The Blair County Association for Citizens with Learning Disabilities is a local support group. For information, call 944-5785, or write: P.O. Box 1528, Altoona, Pa., 16603.

The Blair County Children's Center is another local source of information. It offers free developmental screenings for children from birth to three years of age. Phone 944-8177 for an appointment and details.

The following warning signs are taken from "Clues of Learning Disabilities," a checklist compiled by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Committee, Association for Children with Learning Disabilities.

- Short attention span, easily distracted and forgetful.
- Has difficulty following spoken directions.
- Trouble saying a word until someone says it first.
- Disorganized, loses belongings.
- Clumsy or accident prone.
- Extremely overactive or underactive.
- Very poor reading ability.
- Poor hand eye coordination in drawing or writing.
- Inability to stop an activity when asked.
- Easily irritated, with a quick temper.
- Tendency to act impulsively.

Patt Frank

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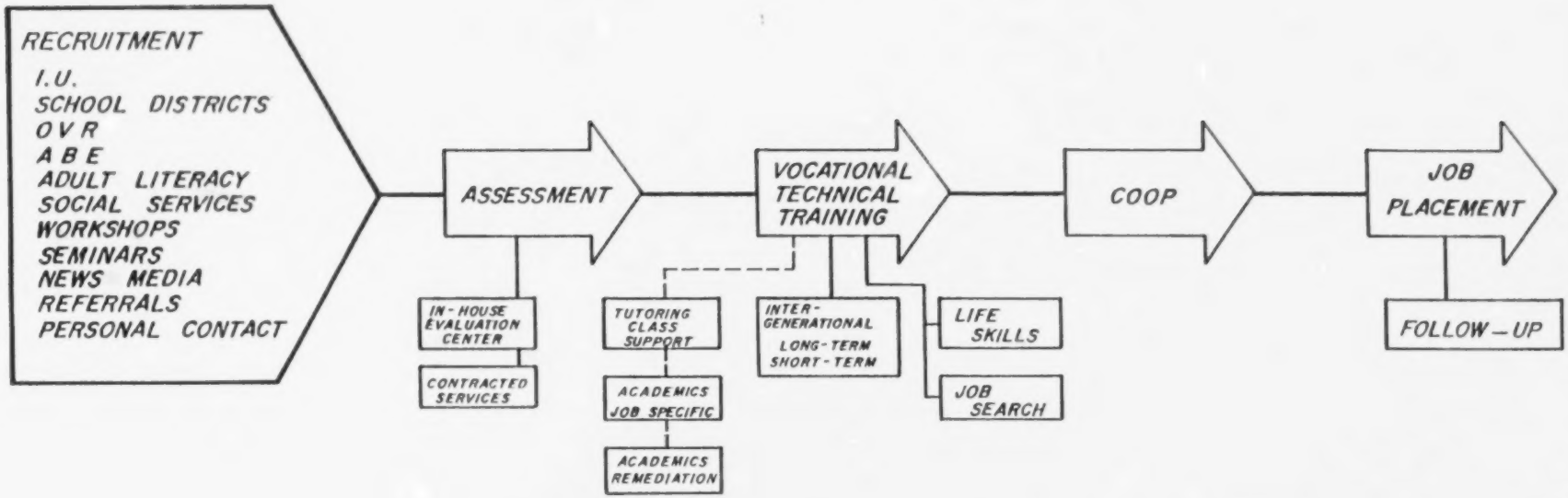
APPENDIX D

SCHEMATIC OVERVIEW

stride


RECRUITMENT
I.U.
SCHOOL DISTRICTS
OVR
ABE
ADULT LITERACY
SOCIAL SERVICES
WORKSHOPS
SEMINARS
NEWS MEDIA
REFERRALS
PERSONAL CONTACT
ASSESSMENT
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL TRAINING
COOP
JOB PLACEMENT
IN-HOUSE EVALUATION CENTER
CONTRACTED SERVICES
TUTORING CLASS SUPPORT
ACADEMICS JOB SPECIFIC
ACADEMICS REMEDIATION
INTER-GENERATIONAL
LONG-TERM
SHORT-TERM
LIFE SKILLS
JOB SEARCH
FOLLOW-UP

APPENDIX E

INDIVIDUAL TRANSITION PLAN

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

LONG TERM GOAL: _____

_____

Objectives:	Activities:	Length/duration	Persons resp.	Materials
Evaluations Woodcock/Johnson Adjective VIAS Psychological School records Other Singer				
Vocational Training				
Life Coping/ Work Readiness				
Job Specific				
Resource Math				
Co-op Instruction				

Comments:

The undersigned have participated in the preparation of this Individual Transitional Plan and are in agreement, and understand their responsibility as stated.

_____ student

_____ project co-ordinator

_____ project director

_____ instructor

_____ co-op

_____ OVR

_____ other

_____

_____

APPENDIX F

SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION FORM

Project STRIDE
Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School
Adult and Continuing Education
1500 Fourth Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602

SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE

Employees' Name: _____ Date Hired: _____

Job Title: _____ Current Date: _____

Job Site: _____

Job Supervisor: _____

Please circle the number that best represents your opinion about the employee's present performance.

The employee:	Not often enough	Usually	Always
1. arrives and leaves on time.	1	2	3
2. maintains good attendance.	1	2	3
3. takes meals and breaks appropriately.	1	2	3
4. maintains a good appearance.	1	2	3
5. is willing to work and shows initiative.	1	2	3
6. accepts correction in a positive manner.	1	2	3
7. asks question when necessary.	1	2	3
8. attends to job tasks consistently.	1	2	3
9. demonstrates appropriate interactions with others.	1	2	3

PLEASE RATE THE EMPLOYEE ON THE FOLLOWING:

	EXCELLENT	SATISFACTORY	UNSATISFACTORY
SKILL	3	2	1
KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT	3	2	1

A Manual for Implementing

Project **STRIDE**

Services for Transition to Independence through Education

An individually responsive vocational training program designed to enhance the employability of learning disabled and other mildly handicapped adults.

Institute
for the Study
of Adult Literacy
The Pennsylvania
State University

1990

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Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, The Pennsylvania State University, 204 Calder Way, Suite 209, University Park, PA 16801 (814) 863-3777.

A Manual for Implementing Project **STRIDE**

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Purpose of this Manual

This manual serves as a guide for individuals who wish to set up a vocational training and job placement program for mildly handicapped adults in a vo-tech setting. It is based on the experiences of staff at the Pennsylvania State University and the Altoona Area Vocational Technical School, Altoona, Pennsylvania, as they developed Project STRIDE, a model vocational training and job placement program for learning disabled and handicapped adults. An overview of the project can be found in Appendix A. A schematic overview of this model project can be found in Appendix B.

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Appreciation of the Penn State University project staff goes to the

- staff at Altoona Area Vo-Tech, particularly Director Edith Isacke and project coordinator Patricia Frazier,
- project staff in the Department of Education, particularly Joe Rosenstein, and
- staff at the University of Illinois Secondary Transition Effectiveness Institute, particularly Dr. Joyce McWilliams.

This project was financed through funding from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in the U. S. Department of Education, Washington, DC, as a Demonstration Post-Secondary Program (H078C80022-89) for the period July 1988 to June 1990.

For further information on this project contact Dr. Jovita Ross-Gordon, Adult Education Program, 403 S. Allen St., Suite 206, Charlotte Building, University Park, PA 16801-5202 (814) 863-3781.

A complete report of Project STRIDE is available through the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, 204 Calder Way, Suite 209, University Park, PA 16801 (814) 863-3777.

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Statement of the Problem

Vocational-technical training and follow-up in the workplace helps learning disabled (LD) adults gain entry level employment and adjust better to the work situation.

LD adults have a wide variety of individual training needs.

But LD adults have a wide variety of individual training needs, from job-seeking skills and academic remediation to actual job training, while employers sometimes have negative attitudes towards workers with these invisible cognitive handicaps.

Vocational-technical schools can meet the training needs of LD adults with an individually responsive vocational training program. They can also assist LD adults and their employers in adjusting as LD adults enter the workplace.

***

A local vocational-technical school is a logical place to house a training program.

While there are many organizations that could sponsor a vocational training and placement program for LD adults, a local vocational-technical school is a logical place to house a training program of this type.

Vocational-technical schools and their staffs frequently have experience in serving the needs of both adult students and special needs youth. Vo-tech schools usually have well-established employer contacts already in place in the local community. With supplementary staff training in working with LD students, the infrastructure of a vo-tech school can support the needs of a training and placement program for LD and mildly handicapped adults. These schools already offer services for students with a wide variety of special needs, and frequently classes are intergenerational, allowing adult students to blend into on-going secondary classes.

Preliminary Stages

1. Assemble your project team.

Hire paid full-time project coordinator.

The first step in establishing an individually responsive vocational training and job placement program for Learning Disabled (LD) and mildly handicapped adults is to assemble a project team. The key people serving on the project team should meet regularly, at least monthly at first, to ensure the training program is on course. This project team would function most effectively with a paid full-time project coordinator in place. The project coordinator would work directly with students to provide group sessions and individual support and act as a liason between Vo-tech school faculty and project students.

Involve Vo-tech school director.

Include staff from Adult and Continuing Education departments.

Involve other staff from the AVTS, as needed.

In addition to the project coordinator, the vo-tech school's director and staff from Adult and Continuing Education departments should serve on the project team. Other staff of the Area Vocational-Technical School (AVTS) would be involved as suggested by their job roles - teachers, counselors, etc.

2. Determine the need in your community.

Survey teachers and counselors.

The project team must have a clear idea of the local need for a training program of this type. Some estimate of how many recently graduated LD students there are and how many might respond to the project offerings is useful. Surveying teachers and counselors could provide this information. It is difficult to estimate how many adults who have not been diagnosed LD, would sign up because they suspect they have learning problems and feel this program could help. Advertising the training program in local newspapers would be a start. Word-of-mouth referrals will be most effective as the program continues.

Advertise in local newspapers.

Survey local social service agencies, employment agencies, churches, etc.

Although research suggests that LD adults may experience higher rates of unemployment and underemployment than the general population, many times training is put off when jobs are available. When the job market is tight, adults with marginal skills then seek out training alternatives.

3. Identify your target audience.

The target population for this project is graduating learning disabled seniors who have not received vocational training and young adults who have recently left school. Also of interest to the project developers were adults diagnosed later in life as having learning disabilities. Because the project is "individually responsive" the target population can be defined in many ways depending on how many adult students respond. In a rural area, the target population may be defined broadly, to include EMR or LD/BD, while in an urban area, the focus may be narrower. The project team should begin with a target audience in mind and expand or limit the definition as they go. Define the target population as broadly as possible while not overextending your program resources.

Begin with learning disabled seniors about to graduate and young adults who have recently left school.

Extend program to include other adults who may not have been diagnosed as learning disabled while in school.

4. Identify your goals and objectives.

The overall goal of this training program is to assist adults with learning disabilities in gaining entry level employment and adjusting to the community and workplace. Each individual project team will need to derive objectives that will accomplish this goal depending on the needs of the individual in the program and the community. These objectives may include overcoming negative attitudes and lack of information about learning disabilities among local employers. Other objectives might include developing job-seeking and job-keeping skills in LD adult students such as filling out job applications, knowing where to find a job and how to get along in the workplace. Life-coping skills such as communication, goal-setting, building self-esteem and interpersonal relationships may also be included.

To assist LD adults in gaining entry level employment.

5. Identify and contact resources in your community.

Establish contacts in the Spring for Fall beginning.

Since many school personnel are unavailable during the summer months, if your program is to begin in the fall of the year plan to establish contacts with your community resources in the spring of the year.

Personal contacts by project coordinator and team members.

Form advisory council with representatives of area agencies and employers.

Personal contacts should be made by the project coordinator and other members of the project team. To identify employers needs, a survey form can be developed (see Appendix C). An advisory council should be formed with representatives of area agencies to assist with local recruitment, referral services, and placement opportunities. Informational brochures may be developed to distribute to potential students and local social service agencies who may have contacts with potential students.

Survey employers about entry level job skills.

Develop informational brochures for students and agencies.

Some of the community resources that should be contacted include:

Local public school districts
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Intermediate Unit
Local JTPA programs
Rehabilitation hospital
Rehabilitation agencies
Local employers
Local and State political leaders
Single parent/displaced homemaker programs
Local adult basic education and GED programs
Local literacy programs

6. Offer your staff adequate and on-going support.

Help staff to understand
- *characteristics of LD students;*
- *methods to diagnose needs;*
- *techniques to help students overcome their handicap; and*
- *special needs in employment.*

Staff-development activities should be geared to the needs of the staff. Many vo-tech staff have prior experience working with handicapped secondary students, however, the training needs mentioned most frequently by counselors and instructors were 1) characteristics of LD students; 2) methods to diagnose needs; 3) techniques to assist LD students overcome their handicap; and 4) special needs in employment.

Staff should also be given the opportunity to identify their own teaching styles in comparison to student's learning styles and understand how to adapt textbooks and other teaching materials to LD students. Use in-service workshops, print materials and individual consultation sessions to help your staff understand these issues.

7. Recruit

Initial recruitment through high school principals.

Because initial recruitment will be conducted first through area high school principals, it is recommended that first contacts be made in the spring of the year before starting the program. With help from the local school districts, program information should be sent to all learning disabled students who have graduated or dropped out in the three previous years and are unemployed or employed part-time.

Next, contact supervisors and teachers.

The project director should make personal contact with supervisors and teachers to explain the program and provide information to pass to former students (see Appendix D).

Also contact other services in the community.

Initial recruitment may also be accomplished through:

- Intermediate Units (regional service units including special education programs)
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- The local chapter of the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDAA), formerly ACLD
- Adult Basic Education and Literacy programs
- Local single parent/displaced homemaker programs
- Any private educational services
- Articles in local newspaper
- Press releases sent to local radio stations, TV stations, newspapers.

Recruitment must be on-going.

Recruitment must continue on an on-going basis.

Phase 1

8. Assess Student

Initial assessment should be conducted to identify the most appropriate training program for the student. Examples of assessment tools used in this project are listed below by category (see Appendix E):

General information. Intake questionnaire

- Employment history
- Anecdotal work history
- Confidential information from school counselors and/ or former employers

Vocational aptitudes. Additional Evaluation Data & Summary

- Vocational interests, aptitudes
- Self-Directed Search
- Singer Vocational Aptitude Tests
- Job-related communication and interpersonal skills

Academic strengths and weaknesses. Academic strengths and weaknesses (reading and math)

- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery
- Test of Adult Basic Education
- Learning Style Inventory

Guidance information. Guidance Forms

- Adjective Check List (self-concept)
- Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory
- Exploratory class sessions

9. Counsel, refer to other services; develop ITP

Counseling session may suggest referral to other services.

The assessment phase culminates in a counseling session through which the potential student identifies the best available vocational training program to match his or her interests and abilities. This may lead to referral to other services or programs in the community.

ITP developed based on student's individual needs.

For those students continuing on in the program, an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) is developed at this time (see Appendix F). This ITP contains a plan based on recommendations from the student's assessment. Because of the wide variety of students' learning abilities and disabilities, a standardized program is not recommended. Support services should be individualized and include tutors who can help in specific content areas.

However, besides basic job-skill training, including theory classes and "hands-on" laboratory periods, almost all students can benefit from individual and group sessions on:

- basic reading or math skills;
- job-specific reading or math skills;
- general study skills;
- life-coping skills (including communication skills);
- job-seeking, job interviewing, and job-keeping skills; and
- interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

ITP meetings during year as needed.

The first ITP meeting should be at the beginning of the year and involve the project director, the student, and in some cases a parent or spouse. Subsequent meetings should occur throughout the year as needed, and at the end of the training phase to determine plans for employment. The last formal ITP meeting, held after meeting with the placement counselor, should help decide on appropriate placement.

<u>Phase 2</u>
10. Train

Training may be in an intergenerational or adult vocational training program.

Training may be provided in either an intergenerational setting or an adult vocational training program. Adult students' interests may not match the adult programs offered in your school, but may fit better in the variety of available secondary programs. Training of adult students in intergenerational settings has proven to be extremely successful. Adults appear to experience improved self-concept as a result of the intergenerational setting. LD adult students also benefit from completing a full year training program.

11. Remediate and Counsel

Individualized and group instruction for work-related reading skills, life-coping skills and job-seeking skills.

Students will benefit from individualized and group instruction for at least two hours per week. This instruction is aimed at improving work-related basic academic skills, life-coping skills, and job-seeking skills.

Students with very limited reading skills should be given individualized remedial instruction before beginning job-specific instruction. Students with reading skills above the second grade level may use a variety of commercial materials on the market, such as the *Caldwell Reading Program* (Caldwell Education Associates), *Starting Over* (Educator's Publishing Service, Inc.), and *Smart Eyes* (Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.). Exercises developed by the project coordinator to build job-specific vocabulary are effective.

Individual tutoring or computer lab may improve basic and job-related math skills.

Students may also benefit from individualized tutoring in specific math competencies as needed by the job training program. Sometimes a computer lab can be effective in teaching basic math skills. At other times the project coordinator will need to design specific individualized instruction.

Counseling sessions with students should be held early in the year to plan individual programs. While these planning sessions are held at regular intervals throughout the year, individual needs of students determine the number and times of meetings.

Group counseling sessions once a week develop life-coping skills.

Counseling sessions should be used to develop life-coping skills such as goal-setting, decision-making, communication skills, interpersonal skills, and building self-esteem and self-acceptance. Job-seeking skills can be developed through group activities to practice interviewing, filling out applications, writing resumes, etc. These counseling sessions may be conducted in a group setting, meeting once a week.

Summer sessions for study skills are helpful for some students.

It is helpful to offer summer sessions in goal-setting and study skills as a transition for adults who have been out of school for several years. Remedial help for students, especially those with multiple needs, could also begin over the summer.

12. Co-op

Because this program is responsive to individual student's progress, placement in co-op will also be individually determined by the student, project coordinator and placement counselor with input from the vocational class instructor. Any co-op placement should be supervised by a coordinator familiar with the student's individual learning strengths and weaknesses.

Co-op placement individually determined.

Phase 3

13. Placement

The project coordinator and the placement counselor at the AVTS should work together to help students find employment. This process will make use of the already established placement networks in the AVTS system.

Use AVTS placement network.

14. Follow-up

Follow-up consultation and assistance to both the LD adult students and their employers should continue for a full year after placement. The most critical period for follow-up is in the months immediately following job placement. These contacts with the new employee and the employer can help prevent or solve major problems as quickly as possible.

Follow-up assistance should continue for a full year.

Using evaluation forms, mailed monthly to employers, employed students should be evaluated by their immediate supervisors (see sample in Appendix G). This evaluation should cover job skills, transferable skills, and self management skills.

Student evaluated monthly by supervisor.

Periodic personal contact should be maintained by the project coordinator and the AVTS placement counselor with those students who are still looking for permanent employment and for those who are employed. This personal contact can take the form of a support group, meeting to understand the students' needs and concerns.

Personal contact maintained by coordinator.

15. Evaluate Success

At the end of the training period, students should be re-evaluated to determine improvement in life-coping skills, job-seeking skills and vocational skills. Successful job placement is an important measure of an individual student's success in the program (see sample evaluation form in Appendix H).

Evaluate success of the training program by job placement.

Program Evaluation

16. Identify results

Keep track of placement rates and receptive employers.

Keeping track of placement rates for students as they complete their individualized programs is one way to determine the success of the program. As employers become more receptive to LD employees, and the project team becomes more experienced, placement rates should increase.

17. Compare with goals and objectives

Use ongoing records of student performance and insights from students and teachers.

Utilize ongoing records of student performance in vocational training classes, group instruction on life-coping skills, individual skills improvement programs, job co-op, and on the job evaluations. End of year interviews with students and teachers will provide additional insights regarding perceived program outcomes.

18. Make recommendations.

Significant program changes should be based on data from multiple sources.

Data collected for evaluation purposes should be used to make suggestions for changes in the program. Suggestions for changes within the course of the training year can be based on formative (ongoing) evaluation.

Recommendations for significant program changes should be based on data from multiple sources. Appropriate parties (staff, students, employers, family members) should be consulted in evaluating the program and making decisions about changes.

Project STRIDE

Appendices

Project **STRIDE**

Overview

The Services for Transition to Independence Through Education (STRIDE) project was designed to test the feasibility of a model to provide comprehensive training and employment services to adults with mild handicaps using capacity in existing vocational education classes and special needs support programs in Pennsylvania's secondary school area vocational technical schools (AVTS). The intent was to develop a program with per-pupil costs that could be covered by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, thus utilizing existing AVTS resources and increasing the likelihood of continuation and replication. The project was a joint effort of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at the Pennsylvania State University and the Altoona Area Vocational Technical School in Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was conducted from July 1988 to June 1990.

The Project STRIDE model for services to clients consisted of three phases conducted over a two-year period. Phase one included (a) recruitment and (b) assessment of clients occupational attitudes, interests, and (c) assessment of job-related basic skills from which an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) was developed. Phase two consisted of 180 days of vocational training, life coping skills training, interpersonal skills training, and on an individual basis, job-related basic skills remediation and personal counseling. The first two phases were completed in the first year. In phase three, the second year of training, clients transitioned into full-time paid employment using a work study (Co-op site). Clients were followed up on a regular basis during the second year. During the second year a new cohort of students also started phase one. They completed that phase prior to the end of project funding.

Except for an on-site coordinator, Project STRIDE used existing programs, staff and facilities at Altoona AVTS. A unique aspect of the project was that the adult clients attended vocational education training with high school students in existing classes. This feature proved to be very successful.

Results/Findings

1. While the original client focus of the project was intended to be adults with Specific Learning Disabilities, it was found that (at least in this central Pennsylvania region) the total needs of the community were better met by providing services to a broader range of mildly handicapped adults.

2. The Project STRIDE model required full-time day attendance. A part-time model would also be desirable for mildly handicapped adults who may be employed but seek better employment opportunities.

3. The ages of Project STRIDE clients ranged from recent high school graduates or dropouts to middle-aged adults. Older adults benefitted more from the project as measured by both grades and job placement.

4. Most STRIDE clients came to the project with well-defined occupational interests. In most cases these interests were supported by occupational assessment using a SINGER assessment center.

5. Project STRIDE clients had a wide range of basic academic skills. Basic skill levels in math and reading averaged near the sixth grade level. Since many chose occupational training areas commensurate with their basic skill strengths and weaknesses, ongoing remedial assistance was often not required. Most had self-concepts in the normal range, although, a major need among most clients was noted in the area of interpersonal skills.

6. All Project STRIDE clients took vocational training in regular high school vocational education classes. Interviews with both clients and teachers as well as sociometric analyses indicated that adults integrated and performed well in this setting.

7. Eight-two percent of clients finished the training program. Eighty-two percent received a grade of B or better in their vocational education program of study.

8. Of those who completed phase one and two in the first project year 86% were either placed or returned for a second year of training.

9. While STRIDE adults integrated effectively into the existing programs of study at the Altoona AVTS, having a program coordinator who daily monitored and counseled the students was important to the project success.

10. High school vocational education teachers who had Project STRIDE students in their classes were generally positive, feeling the presence of adults was a good influence.

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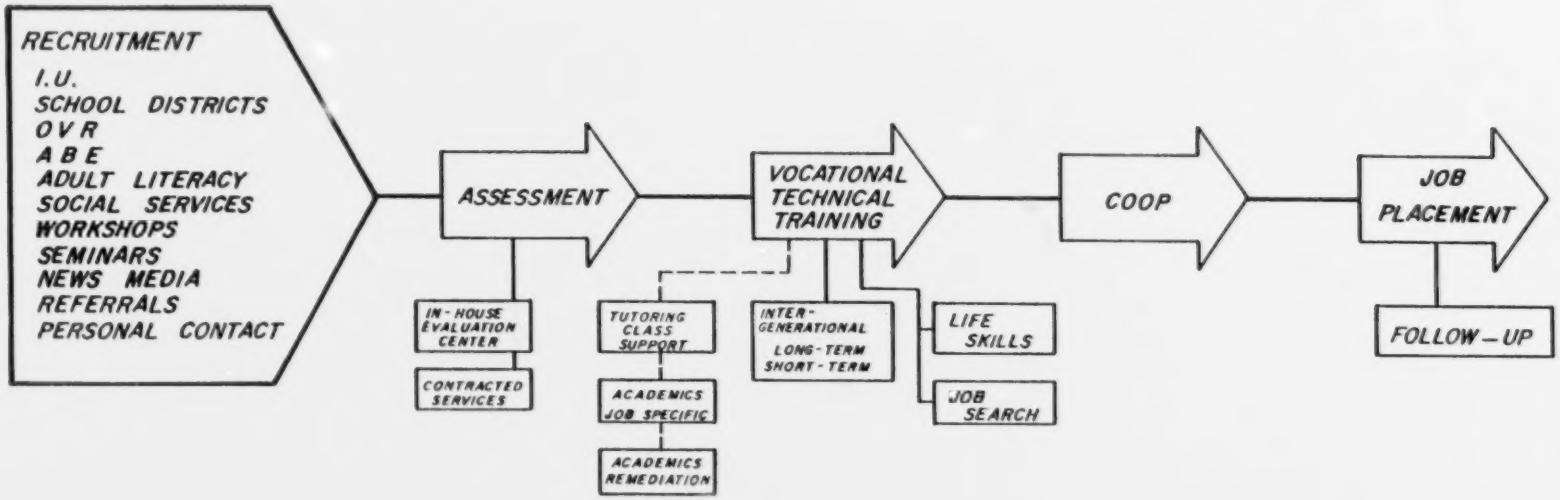
RECRUITMENT
I.U.
SCHOOL DISTRICTS
O V R
A B E
ADULT LITERACY
SOCIAL SERVICES
WORKSHOPS
SEMINARS
NEWS MEDIA
REFERRALS
PERSONAL CONTACT
ASSESSMENT
IN-HOUSE EVALUATION CENTER
CONTRACTED SERVICES
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL TRAINING
TUTORING CLASS SUPPORT
ACADEMICS JOB SPECIFIC
ACADEMICS REMEDIATION
INTER-GENERATIONAL
LONG-TERM
SHORT-TERM
LIFE SKILLS
JOB SEARCH
COOP
JOB PLACEMENT
FOLLOW-UP

Local Employer Survey Form

To help us understand some of the areas we should emphasize during vocational training and job co-op phases of our program, please provide the following information as relevant to a single entry level job for which you frequently hire employees (or a cluster of similarly skilled jobs). You may complete more than one form.

Business_____

Entry Level Job(s) _____

1. What types of information would you require and/or find helpful in evaluating a job applicant from our program?

2. What specific occupational skills do you require or prefer a job applicant to have?

3. Please give examples of materials that must be read as part of doing this job.

4. What tasks must be performed as part of this job that require mathematics?

5. What tasks must be performed as part of this job that require writing?

6. What are the most important worker qualifications, skills and attitudes for hiring a new employee?

7. What are the most important worker qualifications, skills and attitudes for maintaining an employee?

8. What are the most common reasons for dismissal of an employee?

COVER LETTER:
(on letterhead)

Enclosed are announcements of a training program for Learning Disabled Adults which is expected to begin in Fall, 1988 under a project jointly admininistered by Penn State University and the Altoona Area Vocational Technical School. The demonstration project is to be funded through Postsecondary Education Programs for Handicapped Persons in the U. S. Office of Education. We are looking for individuals who have already been identified as Learning Disabled.

Please share the announcements with appropriate personnel who may be able to refer prospective students to the project. It may be most appropriate to indicate a contact person within your organization to whom individuals may direct initial inquiries. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of prospective students who have expressed interest in knowing more about the project should be forwarded to William Shiffler, Supervisor of Adult Education Programs at AVTS. Further information about the project can be obtained from the Adult Education Office of AVTS at (814) 946-8469.

REFERRAL SLIP:

Prospective student for AVTS Learning Disabled Adult Training Project

Name of referral source: _____

Organization: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name of Potential Student: _____

Address: _____ _____

Phone Number: Age (if known): _____

Previous vocational training (if known: _____

(on letterhead)

July 1988

Prospective Candidate:

Enclosed is information on a new program beginning at the Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School. Recently, Altoona Area Vo-Tech in conjunction with Penn State University received a grant from the federal government to implement this training program for learning disabled adults. The candidates will receive vocational counseling and assessment, training, and job placement services. While a student at the Vo-Tech, students will be mainstreamed into regular courses; however, support services will be available to students to assist them with their course work. In addition, students will receive several hours of Life Coping Skills, Basic Specific Job Skills, and remedial services each week.

If you feel you would be interested in this type of training program, please complete the enclosed form and return it to me. Student assessments will begin in the first part of August. If you would like more information, contact me at 946-8469 between 9:30 and 11:30 A.M. or 12:30 to 3:30 P.M.

Sincerely,

Patricia Frazier
On-Site Project Coordinator

Training Opportunity

For Learning Disabled Adults

WHERE? Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School

WHEN? Training Program Begins August 29, 1988
(Preliminary Placement Activities Begin in Mid-July)

WHAT DOES PROGRAM INCLUDE?

- Singer Vocational Assessment
- Vocational Assessment
- Training
  - Construction Trades
  - Electronics
  - Health Occupations
  - Service Occupations
  - Office Occupations
- Job Specific Basic Skills
  - Occupational Reading
  - Occupational Math
  - Functioning as an Effective Employee
- On-the-Job Training
- Job Placement

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

Is your LEARNING DISABILITY affecting your employment opportunities? The Altoona Area Vocational Technical School is offering Vocational Assessment, Training, and Job Placement to adults with Learning Disabilities. Classes presently available are Building Construction/Carpentry and Food Service. If you feel that you might qualify, call Adult Education at 946-8469 for information.

from the Altoona Mirror 7/27/88

Job training

Classes offered for learning-disabled adults

By Kay Stephens
Staff Writer

The Altoona Area Vo-Tech School has teamed up with Penn State University to provide a job training program for adults with learning disabilities.

Pat Frazier, the "on-site" coordinator, is hoping to attract 25 to 30 students to the new program that will offer job training, experience and placement assistance.

She is interviewing prospective students now for the "Comprehensive Transitional Employment and Training Services for Young Adults with Learning Disabilities" program which will begin offering classes in late August or mid-September. Those interested may contact her at the vo-tech school between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. by calling 946-8469.

Some adults have never been identified as having a learning disability because when they were in school, there were no services for those students, said Pat Frazier, project coordinator who is working out of the Altoona Area Vo-Tech School's adult education office.

Some people are unaware of their learning disabilities, and they tend to be "in and out of many jobs, never understanding why," Ms. Frazier explained. Many of them are glad to find out there's a reason why they fail to accomplish some tasks, "and that it's not just them," she added.

Administrators of the new program are also interested in attracting adults already aware they have a learning disability.

The program, which is tuition-free, offers those adults a chance to learn a trade while attending classes at the vo-tech school, Ms. Frazier said. The students will have close supervision and assistance, she said. After about eight to nine months of classroom work, the adults will be assigned to work for area employers. Program staffers will provide assistance while they're working, and they will also assist the adults in applying for jobs.

Penn State, which received the grant for this program from the Office of Education for Postsecondary Education for Handicapped Persons, is responsible for developing the curriculum for this program. But all classes will be held at the vo-tech school, with students enrolling during the day.

All costs associated with the program will be covered by the grant. In addition to tuition, the grant may offer funding to cover the cost of child care services and transportation, Ms. Frazier said.

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For more information on what Project **STRIDE** offers to students, employers, and society contact:

Project STRIDE-Adult Education Office
Patricia Frazier, Coordinator
Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School
1500 4th Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602-3695
(814) 946-8469

SERVICES for TRANSITION
to INDEPENDENCE
through EDUCATION

Project *STRIDE* is administered jointly by The Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, Penn State University, and the Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School. It is supported in part with funds from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, United States Department of Education.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Altoona Area Vocational Technical School affirms that all curriculum offerings and student enrollment practices will be handled without discrimination based on sex, color, religion, national origin, or non-job related handicaps or disabilities.

ALTOONA AREA
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHO
1500 4th Avenue
Altoona PA 16602-3695

ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATIO

STRIDE is a program designed to assist adults with learning disabilities to achieve independence through education and training. It offers transitional services to help individuals become employed.

STRIDE is a program of assessment, training, counseling, support services, adapted instruction, and placement services.

STRIDE offers.....

ASSESSMENT

- aptitude evaluation
- interest inventories
- academic achievement
- psychological evaluation
- interpersonal skills
- job-related skills

TRAINING

- competency-based vocational-technical instruction
- adapted materials
- tutoring

TRAINING SUPPORT

- supplemental theory
- test preparation
- taping services
- test taking
- job-specific academics
- academic remediation
- study skills

LIFE SKILLS INSTRUCTION

- daily living skills
- self-esteem
- goal setting
- realistic expectations
- stress management
- decision making
- interpersonal skills

PLACEMENT SERVICES

- job search skills
- employer expectations
- on-the-job communication
- job-keeping skills
- linkage with employers

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To develop and strengthen linkages with agencies serving the learning disabled adult.

- To provide assessment to each individual to identify interests, abilities, and need for support services.

- To develop for each student an Individualized Transition Plan that identifies needed services to ensure a smooth transition to employment.

- To provide vocational-technical training in an intergenerational setting.

- To provide placement services to students that include job-search skills and linkages with employers.

- To provide follow-up services to student and employer, for one year assist in student transition to employment.

- To provide a demonstration model training adult learners with learning disabilities in an intergenerational setting.

PUT STAMP HERE

stride

Project STRIDE-Adult Education Office
Patricia Frazier, Coordinator
Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School
1500 4th Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602-3695
(814) 946-8469

SERVICES for TRANSITION
to INDEPENDENCE
through EDUCATION

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The Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School affirms that all curriculum offerings and student enrollment practices will be handled without discrimination based on sex, color, religion, national origin or non-job related handicaps or disabilities.

ALTOONA AREA
VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHO
1500 4th Avenue
Altoona PA 16602-3695

ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATI

DO YOU HAVE.....

- handicap or learning disability that keeps you from training for, getting, or keeping the job you want?

ARE YOU.....?

- lacking self confidence
- lacking training
- trying to find training
- lacking job-seeking skills
- looking for career guidance

unemployed because of your handicap

DO YOU WANT TO.....?

- gain vocational training
- build confidence
- learn job-seeking skills
- find a job that is right for you
- become independent

Project **STRIDE** may be your answer!!!

Project **STRIDE** is a program for adults with mild disabilities.

Project **STRIDE** aids transition to employment through:

ASSESSMENT

- Interest Inventory
- Hands-on work evaluations
- Academic evaluations
- Career education

TRAINING

- Placement in vocational training
- Support services
- Supplemental instruction
- Life-skills instruction
- Job-search instruction

PLACEMENT

- Placement services
- Help in preparing for the interview
- Help with writing a resume
- Support during your job search
- Follow-up for one year

WOULD YOU LIKE.....

_____more information?

_____an appointment?

_____to sign up for **STRIDE**?

If so.....

Check one or more of the above

PLEASE FILL OUT...

Your Name

Your Address

City State Zip

Phone Number

Cut this page off and mail it to us. Our address is on the other side. Please put on a stamp.

Project STRIDE
Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School
Adult and Continuing Education
1500 Fourth Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602

INTAKE QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME _____ BIRTH DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK _____ SSN _____

WHO REFERRED YOU TO STRIDE? _____

REASON FOR REFERRAL? _____

HOW DID YOU FIRST HEAR OF STRIDE? _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

1. When was your learning problem first noticed? _____ By whom? _____

   When did testing occur? _____

   Describe your learning problem? _____

   _____

   _____

2. High School attended _____

   School Address _____

   Graduate? Y N Date: _____ GED? Y N Date: _____

   With what subjects did you have the most difficulties with in school? _____

   Were you in special classes? Y N full-time part-time

   What were your best subjects? _____

   School activities _____

   Postsecondary training _____

CAREER PLANS

1. What would you like to be doing, career wise, five years from now?_____

   _____

2. Is there any other area that interests you? _____

3. Are you willing to consider the recommendations of the STRIDE staff? _____

MEDICAL HISTORY

1. Medications currently taking:_____

2. Do you ever experience seizures? Y N If yes, when was your last seizure?_____

   How frequent are your seizures?_____Are you on medication for seizures? Y N

3. Are you currently under a doctors care?_____

4. Do you have any physical limitations?_____

5. General health_____

   Dental _____

   Vision _____

   Hearing_____

WORK HISTORY

1. Are you employed? Y N If yes, number of hours/week?_____

2. List employment, beginning with the most recent:

   Employer_____Beg. Date_____Ending Date _____

   Job Title_____Supervisor_____

   Responsibilities_____

   Working environment_____

   Any problems with this environment?_____

   What did you like about this job?_____

   Reason for leaving_____ _____

   _____Ending Salary_____

Employer_____Beg. Date_____Ending Date _____

Job Title_____Supervisor_____

Responsibilities_____

Working environment_____

Any problems with this environment?_____

What did you like about this job?_____

Reason for leaving_____ _____

_____Ending Salary_____

Employer_____Beg. Date_____Ending Date _____

Job Title_____Supervisor_____

Responsibilities_____

Working environment_____

Any problems with this environment?_____

What did you like about this job?_____

Reason for leaving_____ _____

_____Ending Salary_____

Employer_____Beg. Date_____Ending Date _____

Job Title_____Supervisor_____

Responsibilities_____

Working environment_____

Any problems with this environment?_____

What did you like about this job?_____

Reason for leaving_____ _____

_____Ending Salary_____

SELF-PERCEPTION

1. What do you see as your strengths?_____

_____

2. What do you see as your weakness?_____

_____

3. Do you prefer to work alone or with other people?_____

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

1. What were your grades in school?_____
2. Do you feel that your reading level needs to be improved? Y N Why?_____

_____

3. Do you feel that your math level needs to be improved? Y N Why?_____

_____

4. Do you have trouble with:

whole numbers	fractions
addition	measuring
subtraction	money
multiplication	time
division	word problems
percent	

FORMS

( ) Informed Consent
( ) Release forms

_____
_____
_____

TESTING

( ) Psychological:
  ( ) done_____
  ( ) needed
( ) Interests
( ) Medical
( ) LD Assessment

READING	Y	S	N
Do you have to reread material several times before you understand it?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble putting events in sequence?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble picking out important ideas?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble following written directions?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble remembering what you read?	—	—	—
Are you easily interrupted by noises?	—	—	—
Do you read too slowly?	—	—	—
Do you read all materials at the same speed?	—	—	—
Do you read word-by-word?	—	—	—
Do you have difficulty understanding many words?	—	—	—
Do you lose your place going on to the next line?	—	—	—

MEMORY	Y	S	N
Do you have trouble remembering what you see?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble remembering what you hear?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble remembering what you do?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble remembering names?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble remembering faces?	—	—	—

ORGANIZATION	Y	S	N
Do you have trouble outlining chapters?	—	—	—
Do you have a tendency to do your assignments at the last minute?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble getting all your materials together to do a project?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble planning your daily activities?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble keeping your area neat?	—	—	—

LISTENING	Y	S	N
Do you have trouble understanding what someone tells you?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble following a conversation?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble following multi-step directions when someone tells you?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble taking lecture notes and listening at the same time?	—	—	—
Do you get lost easily from oral directions?	—	—	—

PERCEPTUAL MOTOR	Y	S	N
Are you right handed?	—	—	—
Are you left handed?	—	—	—
Do you sometimes switch handedness?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble copying from the board?	—	—	—
Do you often have erasures on your papers?	—	—	—
Are you said to be clumsy?	—	—	—
Do you confuse right and left?	—	—	—
Do you reverse words or letters?	—	—	—

ACTIVITY	Y	S	N
Do you act or talk before you think?	—	—	—
Do you change activities frequently?	—	—	—
Do you sit with nothing to do?	—	—	—
Do you prefer an active game over a quiet game?	—	—	—
Do you move constantly even when sitting?	—	—	—
Do you work too quickly?	—	—	—

ATTENTION	Y	S	N
Do you have trouble completing what you start?	—	—	—
Do you have trouble paying attention to what is going on around you?	—	—	—
Are you easily distracted?	—	—	—
Are you unable to make decisions when confronted with many choices?	—	—	—

(on letterhead)

August 3, 1988

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School, in conjunction with Penn State University, is conducting a vocational training program for Adults with Learning Disabilities. In order to determine a candidate's eligibility for the program, and to assist in vocational placement, it is necessary for us to review some of the candidate's records from your office.

Enclosed is a signed release form for these confidential records which will be used only by staff directly involved with evaluation in the program.

Below is the information we are requesting.

- Psychological test results to determine Learning Disability
- Academic achievement
- Instructional adjustment forms
- Vocational evaluations

If you have any questions you may contact me at 946-8469.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Patricia Frazier
On-Site Project Coordinator

Enclosure

Project STRIDE
Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School
Adult and Continuing Education
1500 Fourth Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602

RELEASE FOR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

I _____ request that a copy of my evaluations and records be released to the Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School for review regarding my possible admission to an adult education program. Information received shall be used to determine eligibility for the program and for educational purposes.

( ) School records _____
( ) Psychological Report _____
( ) Medical Report _____
( ) Vocational Evaluations _____
( ) Other (specify) _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Birthdate _____ S. S. N. _____

_____
Signature of Parent or Guardian

_____
Signature of Project Coordinator

Please forward requested information to:

Patricia Frazier, Coordinator
Adult Education Office
Altoona Area Vo-Tech
1500 Fourth Ave.
Altoona, PA 16602

Project STRIDE
Preliminary Evaluation

Name_____

Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery	Grade Level	Instruc. Range	%ile for Age
Achievement Tests			
1. Letter-Word Identification			
2. Word Attack			
3. Passage Comprehension			
4. Calculation			
5. Applied Problems			
6. Dictation			
Skills Cluster			
Interests			
1. Reading			
2. Mathematics			
3. Written Language			
4. Physical			
5. Social			

Adjective Check List	Raw Score	Standard Score
Total Number of Adjectives		
Favorable Adjectives		
Unfavorable Adjectives		

Vocational Interest Assessment System (Three Highest Interest Areas)	Score	Percentile
1.		
2.		
3.		

Singer Work Samples Completed	Score	Percentile
1.		
2.		
3.		

Project STRIDE
Activity Record

Name_____ Initial contact made by_____

Date of initial interview_____ Source of referral_____

Who accompanied?_____ OVR Counselor_____

Comments:

OVR contact made (for evaluation)_____

Records Requested:

From	Date Requested	Date Received
1._____	_____	_____
1._____	_____	_____
1._____	_____	_____

Original Diagnosis of LD:
Place_____ Age/Grade Level_____
Most Recent Evaluation:
Place_____ Age/Grade Level_____

Human Subjects Consent Signed_____

Preliminary Evaluation:

Assessment	Date
Woodcock-Johnson Achievement	_____
Adjective Check List	_____
Vocational Interest Assessment	_____
Singer Stations	
1._____	_____
2._____	_____
3._____	_____
Exploratory Classes	
1._____	_____
2._____	_____
3._____	_____

Initial ITP meeting date:_____
Training Program Initiated:_____ Date_____

Additional Evaluation Data and Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses

Name_____ Date_____

Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale Date Administered_____

Full Scale	_____		
Verbal	_____	Performance	_____
Information	_____	Picture Completion	_____
Digit Span	_____	Picture Arrangement	_____
Vocabulary	_____	Block Design	_____
Arithmetic	_____	Object Assembly	_____
Comprehension	_____	Digit Symbol	_____
Similarities	_____		

Cognitive Processing Tests	Scores	Date
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Reading Tests

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Math Tests

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Vocational Tests

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Indicate if identified as Strength or Weakness:	Strength (Give Diagnostic Reference)	Weakness
Oral Language		
Receptive		
Vocabulary	_____	_____
Comprehension	_____	_____
Following Directions (memory)	_____	_____
Expressive		
Quality (abstractness)	_____	_____
Retrieval	_____	_____
Sequencing (sounds, words)	_____	_____
Morphology (word endings)	_____	_____
Syntax	_____	_____
Synthesis (sound blending)	_____	_____
Auditory Ability		
Acuity	_____	_____
Perception	_____	_____
Discrimination	_____	_____
Closure	_____	_____
Memory		
Immediate	_____	_____
Sequencing	_____	_____
Long-term	_____	_____
Visual Ability		
Acuity/Depth	_____	_____
Perception	_____	_____
Discrimination	_____	_____
Closure	_____	_____
Spatial	_____	_____
Figure-Ground	_____	_____
Memory		
Immediate	_____	_____
Sequencing	_____	_____
Long-term	_____	_____
Motor Ability		
Gross Motor	_____	_____
Fine Motor	_____	_____
Visual Motor	_____	_____
Articulation (speech)	_____	_____

Social Maturity

Comments:_____

Reading

Single words	_____	_____
Word attack	_____	_____
Comprehension	_____	_____
Silent	_____	_____
Oral	_____	_____

Written Language

Productivity	_____	_____
Ideation	_____	_____
Spelling	_____	_____
Mechanics	_____	_____
Handwriting	_____	_____

Mathematics

Computation	_____	_____
Concepts (including measurement)	_____	_____
Reasoning	_____	_____

Project STRIDE
Individual Guidance Form

Student Name: _____
Vocational Area: _____
Job Preference: _____
Job Considerations: _____

Personal issues:
- Driver's license _____
- Age _____
- Appropriate clothing _____
- Transportation _____
- Medical/Dental _____
- Diploma or GED _____

Health:
- Speech _____
- General health _____
- Limitations _____

Work orientation:
- Desire to work _____
- Enthusiasm _____
- Self-directed _____
- Motivation _____
- Realistic expectations _____
- Other _____

Job-Search Skills:
- Personal appearance _____
- Personal mannerisms _____
- Communication Skills _____
- Can complete application _____
- Can describe skills _____
- Can be positive _____
- Current work history _____
- Employment objective _____
- Completed resume _____

Transferable Skills:
- Good attendance _____
- Punctuality _____
- Works well under supervision _____
- Works well w/co-workers _____
- Follows written directions _____
- Follows oral directions _____
- Accepts responsibility _____
- Works independently _____
- Willing to learn _____
- Pride in work _____
- Self-starter _____

Education/training:
- Reading level _____
- Math skills _____
- Read schematics _____
- Read blue prints _____
- Writing ability _____
- Training goals _____

Adaptations: (write on back of this form)

Individual Transition Plan (ITP)

Name:_____ Date:_____

Long Term Goal: _____

Objectives:	Activities:	Length/Duration	Persons Resp.	Materials:
Evaluations: Woodcock/J Adjective VIAS Psychological School records Other Singer	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____			
Vocational Training				
Life Coping/ Work Readiness				
Job Specific				
Resource Math				
Co-op Instruction				

Comments:

The undersigned have participated in the preparation of this Individual Transitional Plan and are in agreement, and understand their responsibility as stated.

Student_____ Project Director_____

Instructor_____ Co-op_____

OVR_____ Other _____

Project **STRIDE**
ITP Tracking Form

Name:_____ School Year:_____

INTAKE
- Interview ____
- Intake Information Form ____
- Releases signed ____
- Informed Consent Signed ____
- Work History ____
- Project Explained ____
- Questions answered ____

SCHOOL EXPERIENCES
- Special Help: Full time ____
  - Resource ____
- Graduate ____
- ABE ____
- GED ____
- Previous Voc-Ed Training ____
- Other ____

VOCATIONAL REHAB
- Open ____
- Closed ____
- Referred ____

PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS
- WISC R ____
- CAPS ____
- COPS ____
- COPES ____
- WRAT ____
- Other ____

CURRENT ASSESSMENTS
- WRAT ____
- Woodcock Johnson ____
- Slossen ____
- Learning Style Inventory ____
- VIAS ____ 1._____ 2._____ 3._____
- Singer ____ 1._____ 2._____ 3._____
- Self-Directed Search ____
- Adjective Checklist ____
- Career Counseling ____
- Data and Summary Sheets ____
- Preliminary Evaluations ____
- Instructional Adjustments ____
- Math lab evaluation ____

PRE-TRAINING ACTIVITIES

- Study Skills: class ____
  computer ____
- Computer hands-on ____
- Goal Setting ____
- Self-esteem ____
- Stress Management ____
- OVR ____
- ACLD ____
- Exploratory I ____
- Exploratory II ____
- Exploratory III ____
- Tour/Rules ____

STRIDE TRAINING

- Vocational area ____
- Life-coping Skills ____
- Job-Search Skills ____
- Job-Maintenance Skills ____

SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

- Supplemental Theory (ARM) ____
- Test Preparation ____
- Test Taking ____
- Adapted Study Skills ____
- Skills Assistance (ARM) ____

REMEDIAL ACTIVITIES

- Reading:
  - Caldwell ____
  - PSU Courseware ____
  - Montana Program ____
  - GED ____
- Math:
  - Math Lab ____
  - Survival Math ____
  - Job-specific Math ____

PLACEMENT ACTIVITIES

- Taped interview ____
- Placement Team Interview ____
- Resume completed ____
- Co-op ____
- Work Experience ____
- Interviews: ____

JOB PLACEMENT

_____

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- Monthly contact:
  - Co-op ____
  - STRIDE ____
- Bimonthly contact:
  - Co-op ____
  - STRIDE ____
- 3-month evaluations:
  - September ____
  - December ____
  - March ____
  - June ____
- Special Support:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Project STRIDE
Weekly Log

WEEK OF:_____ NAME:_____

	A.M.	P.M.
MONDAY		
TUES		
WED		
THURS		
FRI		

COMMENTS:

Project **STRIDE**
Work Evaluation Summary

Name:_____ Age:_____ Sex:_____

Work history: none excellent good poor risk

Job Placement: (name of business) _____

Placed by: _____

Evaluation ratings: 3 = *excellent*
2 = *satisfactory*
1 = *needs improvement*

1 mo.	2 mo.	3 mo.	4 mo.	5 mo.	6 mo.
___	___	___	___	___	___

Reasons for leaving job site:_____

_____

Comments: _____

_____

Job Placement: (name of business) _____

Placed by: _____

Evaluation ratings: 3 = *excellent*
2 = *satisfactory*
1 = *needs improvement*

1 mo.	2 mo.	3 mo.	4 mo.	5 mo.	6 mo.
___	___	___	___	___	___

Reasons for leaving job site:_____

_____

Comments: _____

_____

Project **STRIDE**
Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School
Adult and Continuing Education
1500 Fourth Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602

SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE

Employee' Name: _____ Date Hired: _____

Job Title: _____ Current Date: _____

Job Site: _____

Job Supervisor: _____

Please circle the number that best represents your opinion about the employee's present performance.

The employee:	Not often enough	Usually	Always
1. arrives and leaves on time.	1	2	3
2. maintains good attendance.	1	2	3
3. takes meals and breaks appropriately.	1	2	3
4. maintains a good appearance.	1	2	3
5. is willing to work and shows initiative.	1	2	3
6. accepts correction in a positive manner.	1	2	3
7. asks questions when necessary.	1	2	3
8. attends to job tasks consistently.	1	2	3
9. demonstrates appropriate interactions with others.	1	2	3

Please rate the employee on the following:

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Skill	3	2	1
Knowledge of subject	3	2	1

Interview Guide - STRIDE Students

1. How did you hear about this program?

2. Why did you enroll in this program?

QUESTIONS ABOUT VOCATIONAL CLASS:

3. How did you feel at first about being in class with younger students? Did your feelings about this change over the year?

4. What kinds of things were done to help you feel a part of the class?

5. What could have been done differently to make you feel more a part of the class?

6. Should teachers have specific activities to help adults and younger students work together in class?

7. Did your instructor seem to understand your needs as an adult?

8. Did your instructor seem to understand your needs as a person with learning disabilities?

9. Did your instructor try to give you individual help in the classroom? Can you tell me one example of something they did?

QUESTIONS ABOUT STRIDE PROGRAM

10. What do you see as the benefits you have gained from being in the STRIDE program?

11. What aspect of the program would you have liked to improve?

12. What did you find helpful about the group sessions with other STRIDE members? How could they have been improved?

13. What kind of individual help did you get outside the vocational classroom? (Math? Reading? Test-taking?)

    How often did you get this kind of help?

    What difference did it make in your classwork?

    How could that help have been improved?

14. What problems came up for you during the program that sometimes made it hard for you to continue?

15. What helped you keep going?

16. What advice would you give to a student thinking of entering the STRIDE program?

17. What was the most valuable thing you learned from being in the STRIDE program?